3 February 1978 25p USA & Canada $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

Ambassador College

APR 17 1978

LIBRARY

Anthony Howard

Mrs Thatcher Stoops to Conquer

James Fenton: The Pencourt File

Profile of David Owen

Clive James: A Biography of Brezhnev

John Sturrock: (,-:;.?!)

Michael Mason: G.B.S. and the Prizefighters

The Case For Camden

There is nothing racist about the declared policy of Camden council on what has been called 'positive discrimination'. To be racist, a policy has to show prejudice against one group as well as favour to another, and Camden does nothing of the sort. Even to rank correctly as 'positive discrimination', a policy also has to take less account of qualifications than of colour or race, and Camden's line is only to resolve matters in favour of the coloured skin when all other qualifications are equal. Finally, of course, nothing can seriously be called racist which sets out to attack the cycle of urban deprivation that lives off and reproduces racial inequality.

Camden's policy also contains a good leavening of simple common sense. A borough which includes many areas of sub-standard housing, much of it occupied by members of ethnic minorities, does well to ensure that there are people on its payroll who speak the relevant languages or are otherwise at an advantage with the problem. (To make this point clear to simple-minded Tories: imagine the selection of local talent by a district commissioner.) There are many other cities and situations where recruiting practices of this kind are used as a matter of good government – Camden only had to make its point publicly in order to be heard by the applicants who might otherwise be discouraged by the routine discrimination encountered elsewhere.

The criticisms made of Camden's policy are an education in themselves. Conservatism in this country has always drawn very heavily on the hypocrisy as well as the prejudices of its supporters. But this week's performance has been even better than average. Roughly translated, the Tory attitude to these matters reads something like: 'It's not me – it's the neighbours.' The voice of the bigoted estate agent is heard in the land – 'I don't object to them myself – but some of the residents are awfully choosy.' If the Tories think that Camden's policy might inflame the National Front – as they claim – then the correct response would be to educate the voters by pointing out why the National Front would be in the wrong to object. Instead, we have to put up with a choking smokescreen of ambiguity. It is almost as if Camden's main problem was not the far more outrageous fact that it contains thousands of unskilled, unemployed, uncared-for people, an alarming proportion of whom come from the New Commonwealth (a term which in itself is used as a smokescreen by racists).

It has been encouraging, in the course of the last fortnight, to see Messrs Callaghan and Rees making some commitment to principle – at least as far as the more flagrant racism of the Tories is concerned. Unfortunately, they have preferred to concentrate on a strange tactic known as 'taking the issue out of politics'. We respectfully doubt whether this idea is a good one, or a practicable one either. It would have been much better if they had come out openly on the side of the Labour authority in Camden, and thrown the innuendo and double-talk of the Tories right back across the chamber. It has been shown again and again that racial prejudice, once confronted, can be beaten and exposed for the false solution that it is, while each concession to its monstrous assumptions only makes the eventual task of defeating it more difficult. There is nothing to appease in the racist case, and no profit for the politician who tries.

There is all the same one important grain of truth in the mealy-mouthed propaganda flying around on the Opposition benches. Many people, living cramped and impoverished urban lives, do see immigration and immigrants as one of the sources of their plight, and may fall victim to demagogues if nothing is done. The socialist attitude to this problem is, automatically, to confront the inequality and the shortage by radical social reform. It is precisely because the Camden policy shows evidence of a serious desire to do this that it must be defended. An ounce of real commitment like that is worth a ton of Christian rhetoric. We may be all brothers under the skin – except at ports of entry into the UK – but some brothers are treated more equally than others.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

The Fencourt File

This week, Spotlight brings to its readers the exclusive revelations of the Fencourt File, in which (*Brrring-brrring*! 'Spotlight speaking.' 'Hullo. Arnold Goodman here. You realise that if you open the Fencourt File you'll be sued for a hundred squillion quidderoonies? Okay?' 'Yup.' 'Byee.') we ask the question, 'Has Sir Harold Wilson quite gone off his chump?' The Fencourt File (named after its author, the shabby, balding, deceptively ugly special investigator James Fencourt) reveals that Sir Harold was under a misapprehension when he agreed to talk to Pencourt: he had assumed he was dealing with Fencourt, the Man They Think They Can Trust. Only when it was too late did he and Lady Falkender discover their mistake. As a result, the pages of the *Daily Mirror* have this week been filled with the most bizzare mixture of incomplete revelation and total fantasy, and Sir Harold has been challenged to explain how he reconciles his behaviour with the Official Secrets Act.

Fantasy, as Fencourt notes, has always been Sir Harold's strong suit; but the remarks attributed to him by Pencourt take the biscuit.

> I see myself as the big fat spider in the corner of the room. Sometimes I speak when I'm asleep. You should both listen.

An invitation – one can only presume – to share Sir Harold's bedroom.

> Occasionally when we meet I might tell you to go to the Charing Cross Road and kick a blind man on the corner. That blind man may tell you something, lead you somewhere.

A remark reminiscent of the war-time story that one could always tell the military spies among the beggars of Cairo, by their habit of crying out 'Alms, sir, Allah for the use of.'

Having very thoroughly kicked every blind man in Charing Cross Road, Fencourt is convinced of the unwisdom of Sir Harold's approach to investigative journalism. As for the notion that Harold and Marcia were communist spies, one can only say that, if so, the communist bloc has been reduced to a pretty low level of recruiting. Whatever the qualities required in a really top-class spy, this sort of fantasising is not among them. The most charitable explanation is that, at the time of his resignation, Wilson went through a sort of change of life. The pressure of work had been enormous, enough to warp a man's judgment. Wilson could not trust his own security services, and he was convinced that some foreign agencies were stepping up a dirty tricks campaign. Upon retirement, he relaxed his guard enough to trust a couple of hit-and-run journalists, whose work this week was designed to present him in the most hilarious light.

Poor old Wilson. 'We oft do mar what most we seek to mend,' and in the case of the Jeremy Thorpe affair it was Wilson's good intentions (after the *Sunday Times*'s good intentions) which did most damage to the cause. It is true that for a while the story of the South African connection (first mentioned by Wilson to the *Guardian* in a private lunch at the Charing Cross Hotel, later sprung upon the House during Question Time) served to distract attention from the central questions raised by the alleged attempt on Scott's life. But with Wilson urging Pencourt on, and with the rest of the press vainly attempting to substantiate the South African link (beyond the peripheral role played by Gordon Winter), it was inevitable that several other skeletons should be found in the cupboard. It is clear that at the time of his statement in the House Wilson did not know very much about the Thorpe affair, and that he did genuinely believe the South African story. This alone is an elequent testimony to Wilson's isolation from his own security forces.

The reaction in the House of Commons, particularly among Labour MPs, has been a mixture of incredulity, amusement and quiet despair. There is a real fear of the electoral consequences – not because a former Labour Prime Minister has been made to look ridiculous (although this is hardly helpful) but because of the continuing damage to the Liberal Party. Labour needs a good Liberal vote. Furthermore, there is something unpredictable about the scandal – nobody can tell where it is going to strike next. A few months ago (partly as a joke) I compiled a flow-chart of unresolved questions, in an attempt to prove that there was not a series of independent little scandals, but one big one in which all previous scandals since the war were linked. The first questions were: 'Why did Wilson resign on the day of Newton's trial? Why was Princess Margaret's separation announced on the day of Wilson's resignation and Newton's trial?' According to Pencourt this week, it turns out that there *was* a connection: the Palace was afraid that Lord Snowdon's name would come up in court. But if this kind of conspiracy were proved, then every coincidence might turn out to be suspicious. For instance, why was Roy Hattersley in Bulgaria on the day of the Palace announcement, Wilson's resignation, and Newton's trial? Eh? Was Hatters about to defect? Was he the Fourth Man? And if so, why did his masters send him back?

The Fourth Man! It seemed, a few months ago, a good joke to include that little mystery in the scandal-to-end-all-scandals. And now, lo and behold, here it is in Pencourt, with Harold and Marcia allegedly leaking their fears that the Fourth Man was a Wilson appointment to a top job in Downing Street. He was, it was feared, a top civil servant and a frequent attender of cabinet meetings. (This very much narrows the field, incidentally – think hard, and you may be able to work it out.) Pencourt had learned that Lord Chalfont – Lord Chalfont! – had been told as well, in an open park, where nobody could overhear. So what do they do? They go along and interview the suspected Fourth Man, in the Cabinet Office.

> Courtiour was puzzled by his reaction; he and his colleague might be asked to leave the Cabinet Office. 'Let's look at the practicabilities,' said the man. 'Now when was Philby? 1963? Let's get the timing right. No, it just couldn't have been me.' 'Is this the first time the question has ever been raised?' Penrose asked. 'Yes,' said the man at once, 'absolutely. It really is.'

At the end of the interview, the 'Fourth Man said: 'I think you've spoiled my lunch.'

I am puzzled by Courtiour's puzzlement. What did they expect? Did they expect the Fourth Man to leap to his feet with a snarl and say, 'So, you zink you haff found me out – ha! Let me tell you, my friends, you will not liff to tell ze tale!' Did they expect him to draw his Walther PPK on them, and fill them with lead? Why did they go, anyway? Did they expect him to confess and come quietly? And when Penrose asked if this was the first time the question had been raised, did he expect the man to say: 'No, no, no. I've been under suspicion for months! I've had Sir Maurice Oldfield of MI5 with me all morning, and they just don't believe a word I say! And quite frankly, strictly between ourselves you understand, I don't blame them at all. I *am* a pretty queer sort of fish.'

From the evidence of what has been published so far, I rather doubt, and Fencourt rather doubts, that the Pencourt authors are terribly good judges of character. But they do deserve a certain tribute. They have advanced our knowledge of the Thorpe affair, and they have shown an admirable capacity for making money. Beyond that, they may have shown us that many of those unresolved questions are unresolved because they are not genuine questions. The mystery of Lord North Street is the mystery of a man who, late in life, stepped through the looking-glass of his fantasies, and is now struggling to get back into the real world.

NEW STATESMAN

Vol 95 No 2446

Published weekly at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ Tel: 01-405 8471

© 1978

The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd

Annual Subscription Rates

By surface mail	UK £12.50 Overseas £14 USA $30
By air mail	Europe £17.50 Middle East £19 Africa, India £20 USA, Canada $40 Australia, NZ, Far East £21

For details of student rates write to The Subscriptions Supervisor at the above address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anthony Howard

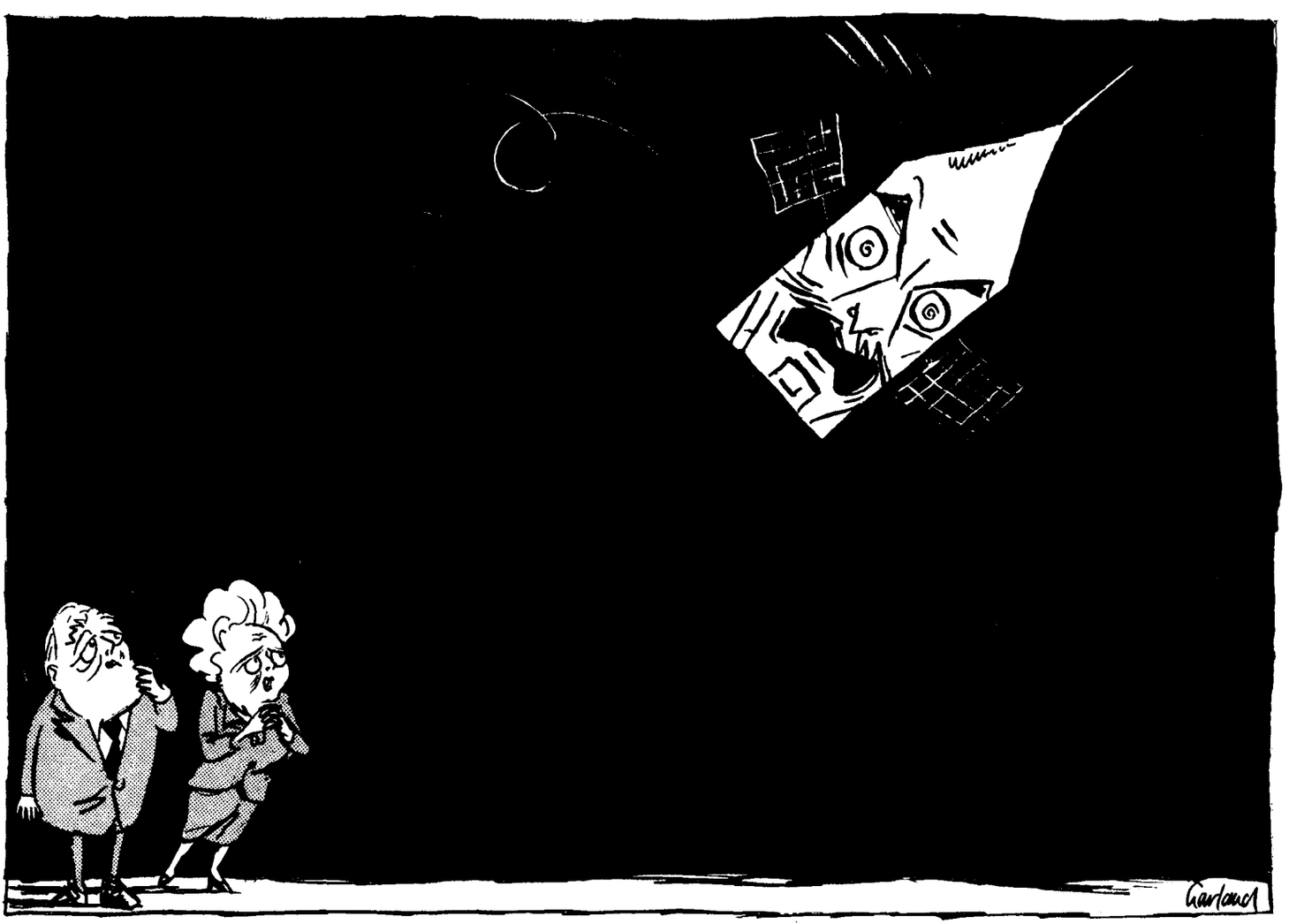
She Stoops to Conquer

Politicians do not watch much television, at least on weekday nights. So it is probably too much to hope that Mrs Thatcher saw this week's BBC 'Play for Today', *Destiny* by David Edgar. I wish, however, that she had – for it provided its own highly demanding commentary on the broadcast she delivered last Monday night. Indeed, so topical was *Destiny*'s content that at moments it seemed as if the BBC was not so much putting on a play as presenting an allegory. True, Mr Edgar did not get his politics entirely right: at the by-election in his fictional West Midlands borough of Taddley it is the Tory candidate who comes to ask the Labour candidate whether – threatened as they both are by the 'National Forward Party' – they cannot agree to maintain a common front on race. Maybe that once could have happened – but certainly not any more, and not only due to Mrs Thatcher's talk on Monday night of immigrants accounting for 'two new towns a year', of the country being 'rather swamped by people with a different culture' or of her startling tribute to the National Front for bringing these issues out into the open.

No, for those with eyes to see, the warning of the end of any bipartisan approach to racial matters had come rather earlier. On Thursday 19 January there took place one of the regular meetings of the executive of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations. Immigration was not on the agenda but discrimination was – since that morning Lord Thorneycroft, as chairman of the party, had put out a statement saying that after mature consideration the party had decided not to be represented on the recently established Joint Committee Against Racialism. To their credit, the representatives of the party grassroots rebelled – and an embarrassed Lord Thorneycroft (and no one can look more glowingly embarrassed than he) had in the end to agree that this new highly respectable 'umbrella' organisation was an acceptable one for the party to participate in. But why was Lord Thorneycroft – and, for that matter, the 'shadow' cabinet that had discussed the question earlier in the week – determined to be so coy about joining a body that already had the support of the churches, youth groups and virtually every other manifestation of worthy opinion throughout the country?

The answer, in retrospect at least, seems all too clear. Lord Thorneycroft must have known – even if the 'innocents' of the National Union did not – about the headlines on their way that weekend to carefully selected Sunday newspapers announcing a new Tory 'clampdown on immigrants', about the lurid treatment that the whole issue was to be given in the February number of the *Conservative Monthly News* and perhaps even about the way in which Mrs Thatcher was already planning to celebrate the third anniversary of her defeat of Mr Heath in the Tory leadership election.

'Celebrate' is, no doubt, too strong a word – for the other factor one is perfectly entitled to take into account in judging Mrs Thatcher's latest political initiative is the position in which she currently finds herself. In less than a year she has seen an opinion poll lead for the Tories of 22 points dissolve to nothing; but, worse than that, since politicians (unlike the general public) tend to read the small print in all poll findings, is the message that the Gallup Poll at least is now delivering to the Tories on the question of issues. According to the *Daily Telegraph* of a week ago even those policy issues on which the Conservative Party has traditionally been able to count for electoral support have now become 'pluses' for the Labour Party. Thus a clear majority of the electorate looks today to the Labour Party to 'control inflation' while a bare majority even now believes that on the oldest Tory trump issue of all – national unity – the present Government is to be



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

preferred to the Opposition. Not to mince words about it, Mrs Thatcher has had every right at the opening of what most people believe will be an election year to feel a bit bothered, if not actually flustered.

And, of course, she has a right, as every political leader always has, to try and recoup by concentrating on those issues where her party still seems to be in an advantageous position. According to the *Telegraph*'s Gallup Poll the chief of these at the moment is immigration – indeed, it must have been unnerving for Mr Rees to discover that, even after his denunciation of the rumoured Tory proposals for curbing the immigrant rate two weekends ago, no less than 58 per cent even among Labour voters still gave them their approval (the figure in all parties was 71 per cent). But if Mrs Thatcher has her rights, so has the ordinary elector.

He is in the first place entitled to be told precisely how Mrs Thatcher and her colleagues intend to set about their work of cutting and slashing. Is the cutback to come in the area of work permits? Only some 750 of those were issued last year. Is it to come, now Iain Macleod is safely dead, in breaking our pledge to the UK passport holders in East Africa? Although the annual 'rationed' entitlement is 5,000 only 2,000 heads of households were admitted in that category last year. Is it then to be – clearly Mrs Thatcher's most tempting option – in the realm of wives, children and elderly dependants? Here there could be said to be room for manoeuvre – not least in the male fiancé provision introduced by Mr Roy Jenkins in 1975. But let us be clear what the implications would be. Mrs Thatcher's own daughter is at the moment working in Australia. Let us suppose she meets a 'non-patrial' Australian young man, marries him and then eventually wants to come back with him to live in Britain. Is what is permissible for her going to be impermissible for an Indian, a Bangladeshi or a Pakistani? If so, we shall have to give up any pretence of there being 'equal treatment under the law' for all British citizens – and Mr Willie Whitelaw, for one, will have to eat a great number of words.

Nevertheless it is, I suspect, in this area that Mrs Thatcher intends to move – if only because it provides the only way to get the Commonwealth immigration figure down to the 20,000 a year once reported to be the Tories' target. A restrictive provision that coloured citizens of Britain should as a condition of their continued citizenship have the freedom only to marry those already resident in this country would, quite possibly, prove to have considerable electoral appeal. Certainly it caused no blush to come to the cheeks of Mr Peregrine Worsthorne when, during a broadcast we did together this week, he confirmed that that was exactly what he was prepared to advocate. The issue, he insisted, was *coloured* immigration – and there was no point in trying to disguise it. But the real issue is, of course, something different – whether Britain is prepared for the first time to enshrine such a law on the statute book. The 'cover' for all Tory talk of immigration controls has always been that they want the numbers cut down so that those already here can be treated 'fairly and decently'. Is that principle of equality now to go out of the window? It looks, ominously, as if it is, and for a thoroughly discreditable reason. Since efforts would constantly and inevitably be made to break so discriminating a law, it could also end up by offering the Tories an additional bonus. For the second policy issue, which is still every inch the Conservatives' own, even in the latest polls, remains 'law and order'. How far Mrs Thatcher is prepared to go in order to snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat no one can yet be sure: but the portents this week are hardly reassuring. We are, I fear, in for a rough – and probably rather squalid – political year. David Edgar's play last Tuesday night ended with a race 'rumble'. I wish it had not seemed quite so plausible a political allegory.

Boris Kidel

The Giscard-Marchais Axis

For the first time since 1956 the Left seems capable of winning a general election in France. Three different public opinion polls in the second half of January showed the Communists and Socialists, unharmed by their acrimonious quarrels, holding a decisive lead over the government parties. Neither the collapse of the Union of the Left, nor the increasingly effective performance of Premier Raymond Barre, who has managed to reduce both inflation and unemployment rates, have benefited the Government. With five weeks to go before the first round of the election, it is becoming evident that the urge for change predominates over other considerations among French voters. After 20 years of Gaullist-run right-wing rule, a majority wants new faces and new policies even if, as indicated by polls, they do not have much faith in the stability of a future left-wing government.

The desire for change must indeed be intense, because the situation on the Left can hardly satisfy voters. The intentions of the Communists, who hold the key to victory or defeat, remain disturbingly ambiguous. For six months they have kept up a barrage against the Socialists, accusing them of treacherously moving to the Right, in terms that were often reminscent of Stalinist times. Above all they would not commit themselves on what is the crucial issue for the Left in this election: will Communist candidates stand down for a Socialist if the latter is ahead in the first round? The Socialists have firmly pledged to withdraw their candidates in all constituencies where Communists are in the lead. If the Communists refuse to reciprocate in the second and decisive round the most likely result would be a left-wing victory in actual votes, but the Right would retain its majority in the National Assembly.

At a national conference held last month, Georges Marchais, the Communist leader, indicated that he would only enter into an electoral agreement with the Socialists if his party polled more than 21 per cent of the national vote. By turning against the Socialists in this way, Marchais hoped to regain his slipping hold on the working class, reaffirm the identity of his party, reduce the numerical advantage of the Socialists and ensure that the Communists would not find themselves powerless junior partners in a left-wing government. Everything indicates that his plan has misfired. His party, according to the polls, is stagnating around the 21 per cent it won at the last general election.

But even more serious for Marchais was the lack of enthusiasm for his new anti-Socialist party line among his own sympathisers. Despite his attacks against the Socialists, 70 per cent of his voters still declare themselves willing to vote for a Socialist candidate in the second round of the election. By making it his prime objective to strengthen the Communist Party at the expense of a united Left, Marchais bitterly disappointed many of his followers. Under mounting pressure the Politburo has been obliged to readjust the party line at what appears to have been a critical session of reassessment on 20 January. The attacks against the Socialists have virtually ceased and on 23 January Marchais astounded his listeners by referring to them again as 'comrades', for the first time since the summer. The Socialists have reacted cautiously and refuse to interpret this shift in communist tactics. 'I don't walk around with a barometer,' says Mitterrand when questioned about communist intentions. At one point this winter it seemed as if the Communists would prefer the defeat of the Left to a victory that would give the Socialists a commanding role in a coalition government.

Beyond the immediate electoral problems, there looms the fundamental question whether the Communists are willing to serve in a Socialist-led government and whether their terms would be acceptable to Mitterand. Even if Communist leaders have stopped their public attacks against their former allies, they remain aggressive and hostile in their private conversations. 'It amounts to hatred,' said someone who dined with Marchais the other night. Communist leaders distrust Mitterrand and resent the electoral appeal of his party. The outlook for constructive cooperation between the two parties appears bleak, particularly since people with inside knowledge of the Communist Party portray Marchais as being closer to Alvaro Cunhal, Portugal's hard-line communist leader, than to the Maurice Thorez of the immediate post-war period when he was General de Gaulle's amenable Deputy Premier.

In these circumstances it is something of a miracle that opinion polls should be so unanimous in predicting a victory for the Left. Sheer survival instinct is forcing the government parties to patch up their rivalries. Less than three weeks ago Jacques Chirac was still in open warfare against

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

President Giscard d'Estaing and Premier Barre. As the leader of the strongest party within the government coalition, he saw himself threatened by what he considered was a plot, engineered by the President and his entourage, to reduce Gaullist's strength in the next Parliament. It was true that as a result of secret meetings held at the music pavilion in the grounds of the Hôtel Matignon, the Prime Minister's office, an anti-RPR front had been created by representatives of Giscard's own Republican Party, and of two smaller parties.

At a luncheon given by Giscard at the Elysée Palace for 80 leaders of the coalition parties, Chirac let his pent-up anger explode. He does not have the reputation of being a placid man, but this occasion he appears to have outdone himself. At one point during his remarkable outburst, Giscard interrupted and reminded him that he was at the Elysée. 'I cannot tolerate such language here,' the President said icily. That evening Chirac opened up another broadside against 'buffoons and courtiers' at the Elysée who were wrecking the government coalition's election prospects and were plotting a deal with the Socialists.

But the harsh realities of the present political situation have obliged Chirac to calm down and accept his rival Barre as the real leader of the government forces in this election campaign. And Giscard, too, perturbed by the results of the opinion polls, is trying to restore at least some semblance of unity inside the government camp by trying to satisfy the RPR with an unequivocal stand. Unlike de Gaulle and Pompidou he has not staked his position as President on the outcome of the March election, but he has warned the nation that a Left-wing victory would bring economic disorder to the country which he would be powerless to prevent.

While officially endorsing the present coalition, Giscard is pursuing his own master plan. His long-term objective is to replace the present government by a Centre-Left coalition from which most Gaullists would be excluded to make room for Socialists who would enable him to launch reforms that he believes necessary to modernise the structures of French society. He assumes that even if the Left wins the elections, the Socialists, with or without communist support, will not last in power for more than six months and that new elections will become necessary. In his view, the split of the Left is beyond repair. Sooner or later, he thinks, the Socialists, or at least a large fraction of the party, will be willing to join liberals and progressives of other parties in a new coalition.

In the context of the present political environment, Giscard's plan seems to belong to the realm of political fiction. Mitterrand has categorically ruled out a deal with the Centre, a return to the Third Force solutions of the Fourth Republic. He knows his political credibility would be destroyed if he showed any signs of wavering on this issue. And yet, ironically, Communist intransigence could ultimately drive the Socialists into the arms of the Centre with a split in the party as the inevitable consequence. In that sense Marchais, far from being Mitterrand's ally, is Giscard's.

Paris

Mary Holland

Enoch's Home Base

There is one thing – probably the only thing – to be said for a religious war. It leaves very little time or emotional energy for hating people because of their colour. Unless Mr Powell himself decides to indulge in a little bloodcurdling, Mrs Thatcher's latest outburst on immigration will be greeted with sublime silence in his constituency of South Down and his own views on how many generations of Asian families should be repatriated won't swing a vote one way or the other.

The Common Market and Scottish devolution don't come very high on his constituents' list of priorities either. Last month I saw him at a public meeting in the town of Newry. The most passionate questions were about security and whether Mr Powell intends to vote in favour of extending British law reforms affecting homosexuals to Northern Ireland (he doesn't). But if the voters of South Down are not agog to divine the exact theological nuances of Mr Powell's elaborate courting dances with the Tories, a great many people, North and South, are now watching and wondering about the prospect of a reconciliation between the Ulster Unionists and their traditional allies, the Conservative and Unionist Party.

For it must be clear that whether Mr Powell approaches Mrs Thatcher, or vice versa, he is now in a position to offer something even more substantial than his own not inconsiderable political acumen and charisma. He has used the time since the last election to weld the hitherto despised and unruly Unionist MPs at Westminster into an effective parliamentary force, as Mr Callaghan well knows. Having coaxed or bullied the Labour Government into considering giving Northern Ireland more MPs, he can hope before too long to count on the support of 13 or 14 Unionist MPs. All of which makes Mr Powell's present position rather different from that of the erstwhile ex-MP for Wolverhampton, an irony which Michael Foot, as the main architect of his new powers, must appreciate.

It is true that most of his Unionist colleagues have little interest in the erosion of parliamentary sovereignty by Brussels or the immigration figures. They do, however, have a healthy regard for Mr Powell's political skills and for what he has helped them to achieve at Westminster. Unless they disagree with him violently, which is only likely to happen on matters affecting Ulster, they are happy enough to go along with his arguments. As important, they are natural conservatives. Indeed, one of the most traumatic aspects of their experience over the past decade has been their abandonment by the Conservative Party. Already an ingenious theory is being floated to account for the treachery of that period. On TV these days Unionist spokesmen have begun to explain that it was a tragic abberation by Edward Heath and his henchman, Willie Whitelaw. Heath, it is gently suggested, was not a real Conservative. Now, with Mrs Thatcher in control, everything is different. Has she not made Aircy Neave her Irish Lieutenant, and the public utterances of Mr Neave are extreme enough to satisfy even the most suspicious unionist? (The other political grouping, happy about the presence of Mr Neave is the Provisional IRA, but that's another pot of stew entirely).

Mr Powell's Irish dimension is of little interest to Westminster watchers intrigued by the prospect of his re-entry into mainstream British politics. But for Mr Powell himself, who is not only MP for South Down but a member of an Ulster political party, his relationship with Northern Ireland cannot be so easily relegated. For a start, he knows that the Unionists not only threw him a political lifeline at a time of great need, but that they also provided him with a dignified refuge from which to plan a new assault on British politics. By proving, on the whole, apt and willing learners they have gone further and given him a power base in Parliament itself. Besides Northern Ireland fits very well into at least one of his present political obsessions: the preservation, at all costs, of the Union.

At home in the constituency he is a diligent local representative. In his own rather formal and awkward fashion he seems to have a genuine affection for the place which rescued him from the political wilderness. He must know that to leave South Down for a more convenient English seat, should one come on offer, would be seen as a betrayal by the Unionists – proof of all those accusations that he was an English carpetbagger.

Against all this, South Down does have grave disadvantages. For a start, it is by no means a safe seat. In the last election Powell had a majority of 3,500 out of a vote of 66,000, not very impressive compared with the 31,000 majority of his neighbour in North Down, Jim Kilfedder, or with most of his Unionist colleagues. Voting in South Down, as everywhere in Ulster, is tribal and there happens to be a small Protestant majority. But it only needs the oft threatened intervention of a Paisleyite fatally to split the Protestant vote.

All this means that South Down is a less than ideal place from which to plan and run a career in national politics. Other political leaders have operated from as unlikely places – one thinks of Jo Grimond and any number of Liberals. But there is one crucial difference. Their constituencies are not at war, with the voters either bombing or being bombed. In such circumstances the big issues of national and international politics come a very poor second indeed to a local obsession with physical survival. It may be unreasonable but they do expect their MP to feel the same way.

Belfast

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hilary Land*

A Better Deal for Women?

'This is one of the most important and significant milestones in British social security history,' said Stanley Orme, Minister of Social Security, at a teach-in held last week to launch the DHSS's final major campaign to publicise the new state pension scheme before it comes into operation in April this year. Then most of us will start to pay higher contributions although payment of the new earnings-related pensions will not begin until April 1979. There are however – some buried deep in the detail of the legislation and administrative rules – other new provisions and changes in benefit which will take effect this year. Some of them are of particular interest to women. After all the social security system was excluded from the terms of reference of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 on the grounds that inequalities between men and women were already being dealt with under the Social Security Pensions Act 1975. Some reductions in the inequalities experienced by women, especially married women, are therefore to be expected. It would be quite wrong, however, to assume that the battle for the equal treatment of men and women in the social security scheme is won. On the contrary, there is a long way to go and judging by its lukewarm and ambivalent attitude towards the proposed EEC directive on equal treatment as revealed in the debate in the House of Commons just before Christmas, the Government is going to make the battle as protracted as it can.

The most obvious inequality, women's earlier retirement age, remains. Having the same retirement age for men and women is not one of the Government's top priorities at the moment. At the DHSS teach-in last week, Lady Lockwood, chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, failed to get the Minister to make even a statement of intent that this would be brought about at some time in the future.

There are, however, some forms of discrimination against women, in particular married women, which will disappear in April. The choice open to married women of not paying the full contribution is going to be phased out and in contrast to the previous scheme it will be worthwhile for many, if not most, married women to pay in full. For example, as well as getting a pension in their own right on the same basis as men, married women for the first time ever will receive the same level of unemployment and sickness benefit for themselves instead of at a lower rate. So far so good. However when they are sick or unemployed they will not automatically get additional benefits for the children unless their husband is incapable of paid employment. Men will continue to get extra for their children even when they have an earning wife. The proposed EEC directive would make such discrimination illegal so the Government appears to be trying to negotiate a change in the provisions of the directive. Most other member countries do not have the same difficulties over dependancy benefits because they have much more generous child benefits. Of course to supplement our inadequate child benefits only when the father is sick or unemployed underlines the view that men support families, whereas women take paid work only to support themselves unless they have a chronically sick or disabled husband. In reality half of all married men have an earning wife who contributes on average a quarter of the family income, one in seven contributing between a third and a half.

The only departure from the long established and much-cherished assumption that within marriage only men are breadwinners and only women should have primary responsibility for the care of children, the sick and the elderly is contained in the regulations governing the protection of basic pension rights while a man or woman is away from paid work looking after children or a severely disabled adult. Although it was clear from the wording of the Act that single men who had to stay at home to look after an infirm patient, for example, would in effect be credited with basic pension contributions it was not certain whether this would include married men capable of paid employment who *chose* to stay home while their wife was the breadwinner. Indeed, a former Minister of Social Security, the late Brian O'Malley said in 1975, 'what we are concerned with in national insurance terms is not to reflect role duplication, but merely to provide for *the genuine case of involuntary role reversal*' [My italics]. However as the explanatory leaflet (NP7) just published confirms, a married man will not lose out on his basic retirement pension if he stays at home to look after the children provided his wife has agreed that the child benefit should be paid to him, thus recognising the fact that he is taking on the responsibilities of child care. (This is the first time that the British social security system has neither ignored nor penalised a married couple who *choose* role reversal.)

The Government's ambivalence about modifying these assumptions about the division of responsibilities between men and women in the family and thereby removing major barriers against the achievement of equality between the sexes can be seen also in recent developments in both contributory and non-contributory sickness and invalidity benefits.

Those who administer the national insurance sickness benefit scheme have always assumed that if a woman is capable of housework, she is not in fact ill. The instructions issued by the DHSS to doctors concerning medical evidence for social security purposes ask them to consider the question of fitness for alternative work after a lengthy period of illness. As far as women are concerned this means assessing their capacity to perform household duties. The instructions issued in October 1976 stated:

> If a woman has for some considerable time (perhaps 6 months or so) been advised to refrain from her normal paid employment but is nevertheless doing an amount of housework in her own home for which she could reasonably expect to be paid if it were done for an employer, there will generally be no grounds for continuing to issue statements of advice to refrain from work.

Similarly DHSS visiting officers fill in a form, which has a separate section for a woman ascertaining whether 'she is able to look after her family (if any) and do her own housework and laundry'. So far these considerations have only applied to women but as a result of a National Insurance commissioner's decision in August 1977 the question of ability to do housework will be applied to men as well as women. The commissioner stated that as far as a man was concerned

> if the evidence showed that he undertook household chores, as many men now do, or worked in the garden, that evidence would be admissible on the question whether he is capable of remunerative work.

Last October Stanley Orme stated that the instructions to doctors and visiting officers would be amended to apply to *all* claimants. Of course, we do not know how doctors have been using ability to do housework as a criterion for fitness for work and how far, if at all, they would apply it to men in practice. However, in future men as well as women who have been receiving sickness benefit for some time, would be advised not to answer the door bell clutching a dustpan and brush or dishmop!

This change would seem to suggest that the DHSS recognises that housework is no longer an activity which is exclusive to women. However the terms under which the new non-contributory invalidity pension was extended to married women, in November last year, lead to the opposite conclusion. Men and single women (provided they are not deemed to be cohabiting) are eligible for this pension on the basis of an inadequate national insurance contribution record and incapacity for paid work. Their eligibility for benefit is not affected by their ability to shop, cook, clean and do their own washing. However a married woman will only qualify if she is too disabled to take paid employment *and* to perform these normal household duties. (It is interesting to note that the legislation actually refers to 'duties' not work or tasks.) This new benefit is certainly contrary to the spirit of the Sex Discrimination Act. So, too, is the new invalid care allowance which is paid to anyone except a *married* woman who has to give up paid employment in order to care for a sick or elderly relative.

It is clear that it would be expensive to treat men and women equally in our social security system. However before succumbing to the economic excuse for inaction it is worth looking at resources already used to support marriage and seeing whether they could be used differently. In particular there is the married man's tax allowance which now costs the Exchequer nearly £2,000m. annually in forgone revenue. The EOC's recent discussion document on discrimination in the tax system and the Mead com-

Hilary Land is Research Fellow in the Department of Social Administration at the University of Bristol.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Company Philosophy

★ To give complete customer satisfaction by efficient and courteous service, with value for money.

★ To increase profitability and earnings per share each year in order to encourage investment and to improve and expand the business.

★ To provide good working conditions and to ensure effective communication at all levels, so as to develop better understanding and help decision making.

★ To ensure that there is no discrimination between staff on grounds of sex, race, colour or creed; by training and development to encourage promotion within the Company, on a basis of merit and ability.

★ To act with integrity at all times, and with a sense of responsibility towards the public.

★ To support managers and their staff in the use of their initiative to improve the quality and profitability of their work, while following the Company's policies.

★ To recognise the individual importance of every employee, and their contributions to the Company's objectives.

Trust Houses Forte

thf

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mittee proposals for reforming income tax published last week, include recommendations that it should be abolished, and spent instead on better child benefits together with an additional benefit paid to those whose home responsibilities keep them from taking paid employment. We might then make some progress towards reducing discrimination against women. But then does the Government want to do so? These recent developments suggest a considerable lack of enthusiasm.

Patrick Wintour

Casualties on the Home Front

'For most people owning one's home is a basic and natural desire which for more and more people is becoming attainable.' Considering that mortgage rates are at their lowest for four years, that 55 per cent of the housing stock is now owner-occupied, as opposed to just over a quarter in 1947, and that 2.5 million people have bought their own homes since 1970, this quotation from last year's Government housing Green Paper might well seem no more than a statement of the obvious. But the trend towards owner-occupation is also producing an increasing number of casualties among those who tried to attain their own home but failed. In England, but outside London, the percentage accepting applications for help because of 'loss of roof due to mortgage default' rose between 1975 and 1976 from 7 to 11 per cent. This implies that annually over 4,000 families are applying to their local councils as homeless exclusively due to mortgage default – over ten families a day. Despite their fondness for owner occupation, neither the Department of Environment nor the Building Societies have any central assessment of the level of mortgage arrears or how they break down in terms of income and occupation.

The mortgage problem surfaced in its most vicious form during the era of pyramid selling at the beginning of the Seventies. Two companies, Golden Chemicals and Holiday Magic, both now defunct, offered mainly immigrants the right to sell a franchise to sell detergents and cosmetics. The companies worked by the principle of the chain letter. If you broke into the chain early enough – before demand had been saturated in your locality – you might make a little money. But the majority of the credulous and the greedy who paid around £1,000 to enter fell heavily into debt. Many of them had been persuaded to take out a second mortgage on their house – their only piece of security – to finance the adventure. James Hunte, leader of the Mutal Protection Association against the Effects of Pyramid Selling, now claims over 32,000 members in his organisation and estimates that together they still owe £100m. to the various fringe banks that gave mortgages. Hunte is adamant that many of the finance houses involved understood what the mortgages were for and indeed acted in collusion with the pyramid companies. By way of defence some of the finance houses are asking the public to believe they made no inquiries in to why their mortgage turnover was increasing by millions of pounds even though, like Julian Hodge, they were prepared to cash in on the boom by having over 20 different companies operating in the Birmingham area alone.

Judging by a series of conversations with local authorities and housing advisers these same finance houses, scorched in 1974, have in the last two years returned to feed off the inadequacies built into housing finance and the way it discriminates against the poor. They no longer need the services of second-rate lipstick or face-cream to win custom. As the Government's own Green Paper recognises: 'About 75 per cent of all sales of secondhand dwellings appear to have been financed by building societies; but only 10 per cent of sales of houses priced at under £4,000 and about 40 per cent of houses priced at between £4,000 and £5,000.' What the Green Paper is referring to is the building societies' practice of 'red lining', whereby a mortgage is refused solely because of the area in which a house is located, regardless of the condition of the property. It is a lazy and unfair way for building societies to avoid the risk of bad investments. One outcome of this according to David Smith's survey of *Racial Disadvantage in Britain* is that black people living in black areas are more than twice as likely to have to buy their house without a mortgage than black people living in white areas. A study at the University of Birmingham found that nationally in 1972-74 94 per cent of buyers who had mortgages took them out with a traditional source such as a local authority, a building society or an insurance company but that in Soho, Saltley and Sparkhill, the kind of inner city area Peter Shore is hoping to see renovated, only 27 per cent of buyers had been able to obtain a mortgage.

Local authorities who have had hitherto a less stringent lending policy than building societies have had their mortgage allocations swept away by the public expenditure cuts. Birmingham's quota has been reduced from £5.48m. in 1976/77 to £2.13m. in 1977/78, while Manchester's home loan scheme is overcommitted before the next financial year begins. If it had continued to grow as planned it would be standing at £15m. instead of, as it does, at £1.7m. The scarcity has been compounded by the fact that the commercial banks have ceased since 1974 giving home loans for more than two years. The Department of Environment intended to combat the drought through a scheme whereby the local authority could nominate mortgagees for building societies to take up, but a host of surveys have shown that the scheme has failed. The building societies are lending only to those they would have lent to anyway. In Manchester the Treasurer drew a map showing the area where the building societies had accepted council nominees – the inner city area remained significantly blank. In some cities where older houses predominate, such as Glasgow, 70 per cent of council nominees were turned down.

The funding of working-class house purchase and improvement has thus, unfortunately, been left to large and small finance houses which as institutions have little faith in the value of owner-occupation but much knowledge of the profit it can bring. Their combination of high interest rates and very short-term loans mean that monthly repayments are very high. First National Securities were in the last month still charging 24 per cent annually. A loan of £3,000 at an interest rate of 24 per cent over five years would require monthly repayments of £91. Another finance house speciality is the second mortgage and, as the Director of Housing in Southampton told me, 'it is safe to say that a second mortgage is the usual cause of failure to meet mortgages' – these are often taken out to buy goods which cannot be sold back, for example a funeral or a visit to Jamaica or to cover that part of a home improvement which the Government will not subsidise. Worst of all, they can represent an attempt to keep abreast of the arrears on the first mortgage. The finance house can evict on second mortgage arrears and receives its part of the possession proceeds once the first mortgagor which did not want to evict has received its share. They will sometimes do so to pursue the most modest debts.

As the pyramid selling era showed, it is not always in the interests of the finance companies to check the credit worthiness of a borrower – as long as default gives the company the right to sell the house. Yorkshire Properties, for example, sent letters to their clients explaining 'as we have recently had a new release of money we wondered whether or not you required a further loan. This could be used to pay off existing loans, *whatever the circumstances* or buy a new car or home improvements or anything else you wish.' Many of these companies' agents receive fees on the basis of how many mortgages they bring in.

The recent Consumer Credit Act has cleared up some of the worst malpractices. The distinction between minimum and maximum interest rates must be made clear; there will be a cooling-off period after taking out a mortgage in which the mortgagee can revise his decision; all credit agents must be licensed. So far the Office of Fair Trading have granted 35,767 applications and refused precisely none. To eradicate the problem, evidently legislation alone will be inadequate. If the building societies are chary of getting involved with housing the poor it would help if the Government allowed local councils to borrow from building societies by exempting this kind of arrangement from public expenditure cash limits. The Green Paper benignly comments: 'An increasing number of people want to own their own home. The Government welcomes this trend.' But it will need to be a little more practical than that if the trend's by-product of increasing evictions is to be nipped in the bud.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY AWARDS 1977

Newspaper of the Year: **Daily Telegraph**

'For the comprehensiveness of its coverage, for the scope of its news, for the increasing brightness of its writing and perhaps above all for the dependability and reliability with which it tells its readers what is actually happening not just here in Britain but in the rest of the world.'

Investigative Journalist of the Year: **Charles Raw**

'In recognition of his pertinacity, determination and total refusal to be discouraged in face of every form of adversity.'

Sketch Writer of the Year: **Frank Johnson** *(Daily Telegraph)*

'With the new school of parliamentary sketch-writers . . . it's hard to believe that we're in much danger of autocracy.'

For a Major Exposé: **Laurie Manifold & his team** *(Sunday People)*

'It was a long and not always a smooth trail to the Old Bailey trial last summer at which thirteen police officers went to prison for a total of ninety-six years – but that the trail was followed at all and the scent never given up owed a great deal to Laurie Manifold and his team.'

Gerald Barry Award: **Terence Kilmartin** *(Observer)*

'For maintaining standards of excellence, for an unwavering upholding of quality . . . and for producing the best books pages in the business.'

Editor of the Year: **Donald Woods**

'A man whose courage, independence and refusal to be intimidated we should commemorate . . .'.

GRANADA TELEVISION

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Profile: David Owen

The One That Got Away

Adherents of Labour's right wing have, in the recent past, been fatally disabled by giving the impression that they really wish they could be in another party. Some of them, like Reg Prentice, have been and gone and done it. Others, like Roy Jenkins and David Marquand, might as well have done. Aside from the actual Tory defectors, the pro-BBC Fabian and CDS types commonly suggest a yearning for something like the Democratic Party; free from obsessions with class, yet somehow radical, always anti-communist and very occasionally redistributive. Usually, these characters break their backs on the obduracy of class in British politics, and then compound their myopia with their vanity by blaming it all on creeping Marxism.

David Owen seems to have escaped all this. He is too young and innocent to have been associated with the Campaign for Democratic Socialism, when the Right really knew how and where to put the razorblade in the potato. He did start as a Fabian Society member, and in 1967, one year after his election, was signing anti-Wilson tracts with men like David Marquand and John Mackintosh. Yet, partly for being brave, and partly for representing Plymouth, he drew the job of Navy Minister within 12 months of that episode though the night he was appointed he did ring up Roy Jenkins to tank him for getting it for him. Today, while he may rail against the seductions of Eurocommunism one week, he will stick up for the Patriotic Front the next. Unlike the conventional social democratic poseurs, he has learnt to make at least some enemies in the right quarter.

Being a doctor was certainly part of it. His experience with waiting rooms and hospitals, and his reading of the great and good Professor Titmuss have fused into a decent, commonsensical egalitarianism. The plain humanity of medicine, combined with the enforced altruism of the doctor and, in Owen's particular case, a leukaemia victim among his own children, are a firmer bottom for democratic socialism than the pallid, Gaitskellite stereotypes of an earlier vintage. While in 1972 he did identify, and resign from the front bench with the Jenkinsite rebels on the BBC, he spent his backbench days promoting a bill on the adoption of children which was eventually taken up by the Government and put on the statute books.

Mervyn Stockwood, who knew him when he was younger, asked 'which party?' when Owen announced that he was thinking of a political career. There is still something of the glamorous American flesh-presser about him. Very image-conscious, he was visibly delighted at his showing in the NEC elections last autumn (eleventh for seven possible places on the first try). A niche in that area of the party would give him something that the Hattersleys and Rodgerses have never been able to hope for. And, fresh from a well-photographed descent into a coal mine last October, he began making it known that, as heir to Michael Foot's old seat, he too was a bit of a left-winger. (The pit visit, by the way, was under the auspices of his PPS Peter Hardy, an MP considered by Crosland to be the exemplar of moderate Labour virtues). If Owen could only become a good public speaker, which he certainly is not at the moment, he could be a force on his own account, and not have the dreary job of competing for phoney 'mantles' from discredited pols.

If he is lucky in this, then he will be spared the embarrassment of playing the provincial halls to the extent that he now does. And the overworked subeditors on *Labour Weekly* will not have to spend as much time as they evidently do now in thinking up captions for the fetching photographs which appear with such regularity. After the dog days of Stewart, Gordon Walker, Callaghan and Crosland, it must be nice for Labour loyalists to have a Foreign Secretary they can take a pride in. But all the stuff about being the youngest one since Anthony Eden is an uncomfortable reminder of the youngest Prime Minister since Pitt. Not a comparison to be relished by one who rejoiced privately and publicly when Wilson resigned.

The Foreign Office, for all its grace and favour, has clearly been his lucky break. Unlike Roy Hattersley, his predecessor as Minister of State, Owen never affected the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

traditional right-wing disdain for enthusiasm about foreign affairs. His friends, at any rate, say that with him Europeanism was always internationalism. Here, too, his pro-Americanism has been in evidence. On the great issue of the last decade – Vietnam – he took a sadly docile stand. A specimen of his responsible prose on the subject:

> The Pentagon Papers will need to be supplemented by the personal accounts of such key decision-makers as Robert McNamara, Dean Rusk and, above all, President Johnson.

On the great issue of this decade – Southern Africa – he holds strong Christian and moral views. He has said in public that he is 'as much opposed to racialism as any communist'. He was not over-impressed by the absurdly flattering coverage given him by the sycophantic liberal press after his visit to Zimbabwe last April. And, indeed, his next move was to bring the Americans in against the advice of the Foreign Office professionals. Although he holds the view that, ironically, it may be sanctions which will bring Smith down after all, he knows that Britain can do little on her own. The same 'realism' looks a little different when applied to the carve-up of Cyprus or Belize under American pressure, but at least it is consistent. As is his view that a man in his own image – Peter Jay – should be the plenipotentiary in the only capital that really counts. Or the opinion, set out six years ago in his book *The Politics of Defence*:

> It cannot be stressed enough that a total maritime blockade of South Africa is a perfectly viable strategy provided the international will exists among the major powers.

A self-validating proposition but, you notice, a bold self-validating proposition. The lights may not burn late in the chancelleries over British initiatives these days; fag-ends of Empire give off a dull glow instead, but Owen can still generate a top-table atmosphere if he wants to.

Sometimes this policy makes enemies as well. But so far, they are the enemies which a Labour Foreign Secretary should make. The ridiculous Ivor Richard is bulging with rancour over the fate of his Geneva conference proposals. Owen has ditched those without any tinge of remorse, and made use of the African service diplomats who are untainted by either that fiasco or the earlier one of the Pearce Commission. If he has the reputation of arrogance and testiness around the office, then it is primarily because of his impatience with men who have failed before and profited nothing by the experience. Labour's current Zimbabwe policy is threatened by the fact that it implements sound principles about five years too late, and by the fact that the Conservative opposition has picked this historic moment to turn more in favour of Ian Smith (and apartheid) than at any time since UDI in 1965. Word-mincing, as Owen seems to realise, would be time-wasting.

Those who regard him as merely smooth and ambitious are probably mistaking their man. His rationalism and his principles may be unexciting, but in the current deserted state of Labour politics they can take on a certain *brio*. And, for a *Socialist Commentary* pin-up, he has some unlikely admirers. Barbara Castle still speaks warmly of the time when he deputised for her in the battle over pay beds. She was not an easy partner, and it was not a specially invigorating issue, but it was the kind of fight which gets noticed by the teeth and spectacles wing of the movement, not a negligible force.

In fact, for every minus he seems able to chalk up a plus. He and the FO may at one stage have overdone the regard for the 'straight-talking' Vorster, but Owen's loathing of the liar and cheat Ian Smith is notorious. He may have lined up with the cold warriors over Eurocommunism, but he allows that its rise is due to 'the failures of social democracy'. His last Fabian lecture did, certainly, bear the fingerprints of his old mentor Roy Jenkins in its emphasis on a possible 'taxpayers' revolt', but he was quick to have it said that he really wanted to draw Sir Keith Joseph's fangs. Dealing with Guatemalan generals over Belize is fishing in murky waters, but he defeated the reactionaries like Denis Healey who wanted to sell arms to El Salvador. He relies a good deal on the sinuous mandarins of the FO, but his books and speeches are peppered with appeals for open government. He is a keen anti-smoker, but isn't boring about it in company. In fact, whenever the total politico over-reaches himself, the charming boy scout steps in to give a helping hand. In the circumstances of Labour's ageing and worn-out leadership, that may not be a losing combination.

A thing of beauty . . .

and truly a joy (and an investment) for ever

How we save you money

From time to time you may have noticed oriental rugs in furniture shops and specialist carpet galleries, taken one look at the price tag . . . and walked away. Of course there are, and always will be, rugs that demanded the highest prices because of their scarcity value and the sheer excellence of their design and workmanship. But the prices you see in shops are essentially a lot higher than you need pay.

This chart shows how often a rug or carpet can change hands from the time it leaves the loom until it arrives in your home.

MAKER
↓
IMPORTER
↓
BROKER

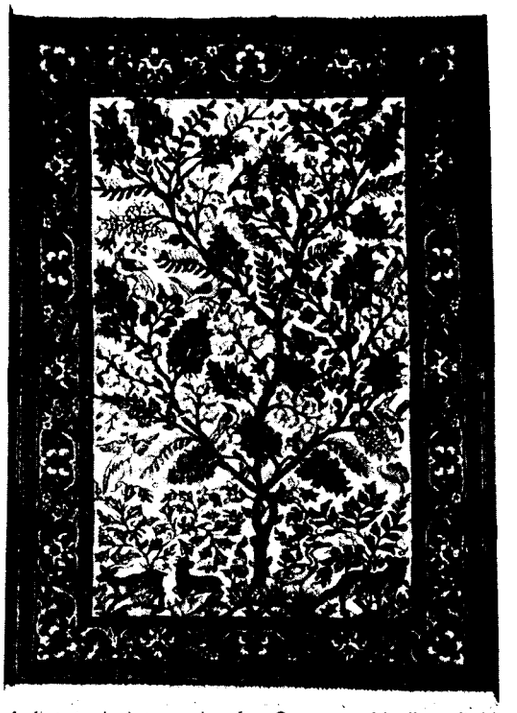
WHOLESALER
↓
RETAILER
↓
CUSTOMER

Every time a rug or carpet changes hands, its price increases (and once it arrives in this country its VAT increases too). In fact, by the time it reaches the shop in the High Street, it may well be priced up to three times the warehouse cost. Sometimes even more! As brokers, we have admittance to the great bonded warehouses—the largest in the world. We sell at less than wholesale prices and that means a phenomenal saving to you. As much as 60%.

Unbiased advice

With the best will in the world, the ordinary furniture dealer cannot be an expert on everything he keeps in his shop—beds, floor coverings, soft furnishings, upholstery, cabinet work, and so on—let alone a complicated subject like oriental rugs and carpets. They demand a lifetime's study and experience . . . which is what we have! So as well as saving you a lot of money, we can advise you; on design and workmanship (there's no "quality control" in the camps of the nomads); on fitness for purpose; on probable "investment value". And, because we are brokers we don't carry stocks of our own—our advice is utterly unbiased.

Visiting the Warehouse
We do ask for 48 hours' notice in order to arrange to show you around—just drop a line or telephone and we will be pleased to show you our selection—WITH NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER at the London Warehouses.



A fine typical example of a Qum rug, ideally suitable for investment, depicting a tree of life scene.

Write or telephone to

HANID CARPETS LIMITED

9 Holbein Place (Sloane Square), London SW1. Tel: 01-730 1539

Transport can be arranged if desired and delivery is free.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gerda Cohen

The Joshua Generation

In the sharp ravishing sunlight of January, we drove north from Jerusalem to find Shilo. It was marked on the map only as a biblical site. At Shilo, ran the brief official communiqué, a settlement had been established that very week; the week negotiations broke down over a 'Palestinian formula'. The highway from Jerusalem wound through pink and ochre Samaria – untouched Arab hill-country, each olive twig, each minaret, held in a hard clarity of light. Moslem villages lay in the scoop and dip of stone, their vineyards winter bare. By one small village we saw a tourist sign: 'Holy Ark of the Covenant rested here.' Bulldozers were crunching out a new road, past the mosque, a mile or so uphill to what appeared a military encampment. But among the khaki tents and machine guns, a couple of young women were pushing their smart new prams.

'Forgive the mess,' laughed Rivke, inviting us into her caravan, 'We've only been here a week. It feels wonderful, coming home!' Coming home? 'Sure,' her whole being radiated, 'Ephraim dwelt here; didn't you know, the tribe of Ephraim was given this land.' Over Nescafé, she told us that 60 adults with ten children had come to settle in Shilo. Soon 20 more families would arrive. All are young professional people, city-bred, who dislike the idea of a collective beyond immediate practical need. All have given up house and job. 'I'm a typical case,' said a tall bearded man, stooping to join us in the caravan, 'I'm a physics lecturer, just left my job – and so what! The important thing is to be *here*.' But why had they chosen a place in the middle of Samaria? 'Why?' he grinned back, utterly confident, 'because here Joshua divided the Land; here the Lord spoke to Samuel.' We drank up our Nescafé in silence, while Rivke arranged a whole library of Talmudic volumes over the record player. She is a psychiatric social worker, and her husband an accountant, who commutes to Jerusalem. 'How we eventually earn a living,' said the physics lecturer, 'doesn't really bother us. There are archaelogical prospects. Shilo hasn't been thoroughly explored. You know Professor Yeivin of the Hebrew University? He wants to start a dig, and we'll accommodate the camp.'

Meanwhile, an Israel Army unit supplied their water and power; the Jewish Agency loaned them caravans, set tidily behind the tumbled ruin of a Byzantine church. 'My kid's a month old,' Talya rocked her pram, radiant, 'I'm a science librarian.' She spoke excellent English. Did she not think, we hesitated, that coming to live here wasn't very tactful right now? '*Davke* now,' she laughed into the sun, 'God gave us this land, through Joshua, and peace is no good without it.' They waved us goodbye, not half a mile from the valley where Arab peasants were out ploughing with oxen. Their single blade cut the reddish earth. This earth came right up to the crags of Shilo. 'Sure they object to us,' said the physics lecturer, 'but we don't need their permission.'

It would be convenient to dismiss Shilo as a bizarre aberration. After all they do belong to an extremist orthodox movement, Gush Emunim. But the truth is, their 'homecoming, responds to a national heart beat. How do we know? Other countries have something called 'public opinion'; Israel has a kind of mass empathy. Within hours of the peace talks apparently reaching impasse, everyone had grasped the underlying strategy. Everyone (from our half-witted Romanian grocer right up to our brilliant bus-driver) knew what Begin was about. Of course he must put up a fight over the settlements in Sinai, the more surely to hold onto Judaea and Samaria. Likewise, Mr Sadat must be seen to fight for the Palestinian cause, even though he is really interested in getting Sinai back. 'God never meant us to govern it,' declared the Sephardi Chief Rabbi, 'or He would have allotted some territory to one of the tribes.' The wrangle over Sinai is mere headline stuff, media fodder. Nobody was deceived into thinking the settlements a major issue. Sharm el Sheikh is not a settlement in the usual sense, but a military airfield with tourism tacked on. Provided that a military pact safeguarded Sharm, some intrepid Israelis could envisage staying on. 'It would be that you British call a tax haven,' said Yehezkel Dor, 'and I love to surf in winter.' He was demonstrating behind a placard which urged the Government: 'Do not sell Ophira' – that oddly suburban resort on the Red Sea, like Bexhill bathed in eternal light. As for the other two settlements on that dazed; coralline gulf, they are mere oases, inhabited by Bedouin and peeling Scandinavian youth.

The settlements in North Sinai are a different proposition altogether. Indeed, before the peace talks put them in North Sinai, most Israelis mentally located them in a vague gap on the Mediterranean shore. Where the vast yellow sprawl of the refugee camps peter out, the Rafiah Approaches begin. Their vista of polythene hothouse glittered like surreal lakes. Arab and Jew co-exist here, in a kind of grudging symbiosis. The dozen Israeli moshavim employ many hundreds of Arab labourers, harvesting and packing. The moshavim have grown rich on polythene agriculture, and they are commensurately disliked. 'They're millionaires,' snorted a kibbutznik from the austere Negev just east of Rafiah, 'they've got a kulak mentality. I shan't go into mourning if we swap Rafiah for a peace treaty.' This, on the quiet, was a general view. Even the farmers themselves exhibited a curious resignation after Foreign Minister Dayan and Minister of Agriculture 'Arik' Sharon had warned them against opposing eventual Egyptian sovereignty. 'We know we're unpopular,' said a large freckled exporter of melon, 'but Dayan, of all people! Dayan put us here in the first place.' A brand new airfield extended nearby, too big to be ignored. But Dayan has said all along 'everything is negotiable', everything, he might add, except for the Jordan Ridge. Military planners would never relinquish control of the mountain range which provides Israel with an early-warning system. Jerusalem is only three minutes flying time away from Jordanian military airfields. The Jordan ridge forms part of that rocky spine upon whose limestone vertebrae lie the ancient cities: Hebron, Jerusalem, re-born Shilo. It's along this axis that urban development has concentrated since the Six-Day War. Jerusalem goes rearing north until her multi-storeyed heights reach almost to Arab Ramallah; due south, the white cliffs of suburbia loom over Beit Jala. So a great metropolitan wedge has been driven between Samaria and Judaea. But at either end of the axis, there sits a fiercely Moslem town: Nablus to the north, and to the south Hebron, where Moslem and Jew worship at the same hulking sarcophagi.

Hebron remains unchanged, filthy and full of menace. Snot-bleared urchins tussle in the dirt; lean desert Arabs silently finger their beads. 'Can you imagine *us* being subject to *them*?' Bernie Wolff spoke with broad rabbinic gesture and a strong Geordie accent. He and his wife Susan had emigrated from Newcastle to an Orthodox settlement on the Hebron road. A stockade ringed their handsome bungalow. We sat in the kitchen drinking Ovaltine, while outside the bare hills curved away to Hebron. Every workable inch had been terraced, their vines etched by the hard Judaean light. 'Arabs own the land here,' Susan explained, 'so our moshav is based entirely on scientific research. We're unique.' She is a maths teacher, not given to exaggeration, with hot-water-bottles on the door and a downright Yorkshire manner.

The moshav families now apparently include so many computer experts and chemistry doctorates that a good few Ph.Ds languish in office work. That still left enough Ph.Ds to run a laboratory investigating uses for agricultural waste. Roger Becker, a food technologist from Surrey, told us about their current project: 'We're developing a grape-skin extract to replace the artificial colourant which went into red wine.' Since the dye was now banned (Roger gave a tiny smile) 'one can see potential for an alternative.' Pragmatic, his haircut straight from Kingston-on-Thames, he foresaw an exciting scientific future. David, an electronics engineer from Richmond, worked in the lab next door, designing an automatic telephone dial with a 'memory' of 64 numbers. We try to keep politics out of the conversation, in vain. 'Who's ever *heard* of a Palestinian Arab?' they put the question in mock wonder. 'Palestine never existed; it was a rotten Turkish province before we Jews came along.' Within moments, the lab is in uproar. 'I'm sure Begin won't sell us.' shouts a big bearded engineer from Toronto. They calm down, because it's time for lunch and afternoon prayer. Every man on the place walks to prayer, holding his skull-cap tight against the tearing east wind.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London Diary

☐ Parliamentary Reform has been a constant activity for the last century and a half or perhaps ever since 1780. Constituencies have been abolished, created, extended. The franchise has been widened by cautious stages. The powers of the House of Lords have been curtailed. But the House of Commons remains essentially unchanged despite many tinkerings with its procedure. Pym and Hampden would be at home in it, to say nothing of Gladstone and Disraeli. As to Charles James Fox there is no need to recall him. Though less rotund than he used to be, he is unmistakably present on the Treasury Bench as Leader of the House. In most parliaments nowadays, members record their votes by pressing a button and a computer does the rest. In the House of Commons members still tramp through the lobbies, devoting more of their time to this than to taking part in the debates or listening to them. Every vote, we now learn, takes at least 12 minutes. If the division last week had lasted 17 minutes, the Shetland and Orkney Islands would have lost their chance of gaining independence from the mainland. Elsewhere this method of voting went out with the crinoline. Here it is certain of survival. For though members of parliament may enjoy the occasional drama of a great debate they enjoy historic procedure still more. Points of order are their happy hunting ground, *Erskine May* their favourite reading. I dare not go on. Otherwise I might give members their most exquisite pleasure of charging me with contempt. Quite the contrary, I hope the dear old Leviathan will rumble on for ever.

☐ The Scottish Nationalists have got themselves in a fine tangle. Like all nationalists they have claimed that virtually all the members of their nations are clamouring for devolution or even independence. Now it turns out that they are doubtful whether even two Scotch people out of five harbour this strange enthusiasm. The Scottish Nationalists should cheer up. No movement for national independence has ever commanded the support of a majority of the nation concerned until it had been achieved. Most Italians did not bestir themselves on behalf of Italian unification. Most Czechs were surprised in 1918 when President Masaryk arrived with the announcement that they had become citizens of an independent republic. For that matter we learn from Theodore Zeldin's book that not much more than a century ago most Frenchmen were unaware that they were French. None of my Scotch friends want any change in their relations with England. But they know they will get it or even vote for it if only to quieten the Scottish Nationalists. Nuisance value is much more effective than the support of a majority. The Scottish Nationalists have already developed one characteristic of a victorious nationalist movement: they are as resolute in refusing independence to others as in demanding it for themselves. Hence their indignation at the very suggestion that the Shetland and Orkney Islands should be allowed to decide their own future. In much the same way Karl Marx, that fervent internationalist, thought the lesser breeds such as the Czechs and the Slovenes should be absorbed into the great cultural German nation.

☐ For my part I shall welcome Scotch independence at the earliest possible moment. Lord Beaverbrook once rang the managing director of his newspapers and said: 'I hear we have wage slaves in our organisation. Set them free.' If we liberate Scotland on the same terms and no longer have to subsidise it, we shall all be much better off. We might have a chance of saving the English language before it is too late. I have protested often enough against the telephone terror from Glasgow which has imposed the alien terms Scottish and Scots upon us instead of the English Scotch, once universal. I am even more concerned to restore the correct first person of our two future tenses. 'I shall' and 'I should' are English. 'I will' and 'I would' are wrong. Yet every day now speakers of otherwise good English say 'I would like' and 'I will do this or that later'. No doubt it makes things easier for foreigners to eliminate the niceties of 'shall' and 'should'. But they are part of our heritage and we are entitled to preserve them. In an independent Scotland they will disappear but that is no affair of ours. I hope also that Gaelic will become compulsory there. If not, they can make do with Lallans. But hands off our English tongue, already mauled enough by the disappearance of its greatest possession, the Version of the Bible authorised by King James I. It is curious that this great benefactor of the English language was himself a Scotchman. History is full of such paradoxes.

☐ The other day I saw at the Tate Gallery the modest exhibition devoted to the year 1935. As most of the paintings are not usually on display the exhibition is well worth a visit. One feature of it surprised me. 1935 was the central year of what is sometimes known as the Devil's Decade, a time of turmoil and anxiety. Only a painting by Paul Klee entitled *Walpurgisnacht* gives a hint of this. All the rest are irredeemably cosy. On reflection I decided that this was entirely in character. 1935 was really a cosy year in comparison with what came before or after. George V's Jubilee recalled the Jubilees of Queen Victoria. The only political dispute had been over the Government of India Act and that had now become law. Pictures of still life were displayed before the hungry Indian nationalists, quite in Metternich's fashion a century before. There was some synthetic passion over the Abyssinian affair. But I well remember that when during the general election I exercised my rhetoric on it, the audience wanted to hear about housing. There was a housing boom. There was a car boom. Most houses had vacuum cleaners though few had refrigerators. The cosy age had begun. I tried to recapture the alarms of the time by looking over the list of books I read. The most sensational were the works of Dashiell Hammett, lent to me by Norman Cameron. Nothing about Hitler, nothing about Stalin. All unconscious of their doom the little victims play. And quite right too. No good worrying about things beforehand.

☐ The delights of being a Visiting Professor at Bristol begin at Paddington. The 125 train is one of the few technical advances of the age that I applaud. But nothing is perfect, not even the 125. Travelling first-class to sustain my unaccustomed dignity, I find no plush seats or secluded compartments. Instead I am in an open carriage like a rail-car in an American film. I do not complain of this. But the noise is inescapable. Second-class passengers are quiet, modest people who sit silent or talk in undertones. The first-class carriage is occupied by little groups of salesmen, chartered accountants and trade delegations who exchange business small talk in loud voices and laugh raucously at every remark. Is their gaiety a sign of the coming boom? Do they laugh to conceal their fears? Or are their noisy exchanges a version of nature red in tooth and claw? I hesitate to speculate and look longingly, though in vain, to the second-class carriages. How glad I should be to exchange this hurly-burly for the deep, deep peace of the old first-class compartment.

☐ The vanishing of our great industrial achievements take the most surprising and depressing forms. I inherited a stock of razors from my father and added to it occasionally by buying new ones, all made by historic firms in Sheffield. The other day I went to buy another and was told that no razors were made in England any more. No English razors? No, not one. I had to buy a German razor and felt as ashamed as if I had sold my birthright. This is not the end of my sad story. A razor needs to be 'set' once a year or so and this used to be done by every local barber. Now the barbers' shops are being replaced by elegant hairdressers who charge four times as much for doing less, and of course no hairdresser will 'set' a razor. Indeed most hairdressers have never seen, let alone used a razor. What am I to do when my razors lose their edge and need to be 'set'? I worry a good deal more about this problem than I do about, say, the future of Rhodesia.

A. J. P. Taylor

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard

☐ Denying charges of burglary and damage, a 31-year-old man told Macclesfield magistrates on Friday that he and a companion climbed onto the roof of a local pet shop intending to jump about on it and scare the parrot which they knew was inside. – *Macclesfield Express* (Cecil Davies).

☐ A 20-year-old unemployed Lazonby man successfully pleaded for his driving licence on Tuesday when he told Penrith magistrates that he would be unable to get to work if he was banned. – *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald* (J. K. Ashman)

☐ Mr Christopher Hudson, who said his snail-training hobby came to a standstill because of marriage difficulties, was granted a decree nisi at Brighton Divorce Court yesterday. – *The Times* (Constance D. Roberts)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

University Forum

Craig Brown*

My Generation

1967 was not a good time in which to be ten years old. Impressionable and full of hope, we listened to the Amen Corner and Dave, Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick and Titch whilst yearning for the days we could be real, caring, long-haired, hippy, students feeling furiously about important issues like Vietnam, taking drugs all day, meeting and even speaking to girls, and perhaps even living for ourselves the lyrics of songs by Gary Puckett and the Union Gap or the Herd. Once you were a student you could forget about what you were supposed to think and what you were supposed to do, you could grow your hair long, you could, as all pop groups advised, 'let it all hang out'. The moment we found out what 'it' was, we were determined to let it hang out in abundance.

Perhaps if we had been students in 1967, it wouldn't have lived up to our dreams. Try as we might, we never quite came to terms with their music – The Cream, Hendrix, the Grateful Dead and Captain Beefheart never played tunes which were quite catchy enough for us, and the struggle to understand the committed correspondence in *Melody Maker* about whether Clapton, Alvin Lee or Peter Green of Fleetwood Mac was the greatest guitarist in the world was eventually abandoned at the introduction of the over-complex sub-section, 'Fastest Guitarist in the World'. From there it was downhill all the way. We began to notice that we were being told by the pop columnists – our only contacts with our dream of student paradise – that the music we liked was teeny bop commercial trash, *Top of the Pops* was an insult to anyone's intelligence and that any record that made the charts was rubbish. Our musical beliefs were attacked by the very people we yearned to be. And as music was at that time the only thing we could share with the hippies, what would they say when we started appreciating sex, drink and drugs? Would we find that we had picked our dream of these out of a dustbin in an unfashionable ghetto? Anyway, we persevered, still thinking that hippies were long-haired students, still longing to fight for a cause, still cherishing the supposedly abusive term 'drop out' and still feeling desperate to engage in 'free expression'. So there was something to work for.

So we worked hard through O levels and A levels, regretting our absence from Woodstock and the Isle of Wight, but knowing that our time was to come. There was slight irritation when we heard that Vietnam was over, and that bombs were now too plentiful to bother banning, for were they not such marvellous, clear-cut causes? But we were assured that hastily assembled Broad Left and Far Left amalgams, after continuous and poorly attended debates up and down the country, had decreed that there was still plenty to get frustrated about, lots of things still worthy of demonstrations and sit-ins. Thank God, we muttered, and applied to UCCA, putting Oxford fifth choice, because we all knew that the world had now moved to the provinces.

So the ten-year-olds, having grown up, now arrived at university with ideals still intact. This would be freedom. Our only slight worry had been the music, but of course rock progresses so fast, other generations of groups would be in vogue. But no. This was the first misconception of many. All the dreary West Coast groups had split up, but had then gone and reformed and reshaped. At least Hendrix was dead but Jefferson Starship, Steve Miller, The Doobie Brothers, anything with the lyrics scrawled on the sleeve in artistic illegible handwriting, The Eagles and even Dory Previn – all these were played endlessly.

The only release from them was drugs. A childhood dream came true – a naughty reefer at last. But this joint that was not served on Sunday was treated with all the conservative reserve of its namesake. As people muttered that tomorrow they might be able to lay their hands on some Moroccan Red or some Afghan Black we all inhaled, passed the joint on with a nod, felt drowsy and wondered why everyone was sitting on the floor when there were quite enough chairs for us all over there. We soon learned the rules – never say thank you when it's passed to you, never have any argument or serious discussion of any kind when smoking, always talk about how stoned you were last night but never admit you're stoned now, never be the one to finish the joint – and so on. The list of what is U and non-U is immense in what is supposed to be this least bourgeois of areas.

And the same applies to university sex. We discovered that the price of free love had risen steeply and that now you were frankly over-charged. Love was neither free nor easy, but desperately complicated. Aspects of sex we had always been told were bourgeois by our hippy mentors – such as fidelity or eventual marriage – we found lurking at the back of everyone's minds, even our own. What we had believed to be traditional student sexual pursuits, such as affairs with staff, kissing in public, homosexuality and sleeping around, were considered stranger in this society where everything was open, than in the one we had left, where everything was closed. In student politics, those causes which had been so carefully chosen by committee were revealed as drab and in the extreme. They didn't even have the simple 'goodies and baddies' moral guidelines of Vietnam. Abortion, disinvestment in South Africa, unmarried mothers, nursery schools, immigrant welfare, student housing, the hierarchical structure of each department, the price of canteen food, and the resignation of such and such an officer all held limitations for young hearts burning to support something big and important, or even something small and important. We would have to rebel elsewhere.

Sadly, the established outlet for rebellion, the arts, had this air of the new conformist too. Arriving at university post-Monty Python, we were presented with a choice between the dull, the humourless and the incomprehensible. Brecht and Edward Bond dominated the student stage, though every now and then a new play by a student appeared, performed in any room they could find as long as it wasn't a theatre, written in the style of Brecht or Edward Bond, without props or scenery and with, God help us, audience participation. The only films to like were subtitled and preferably black and white as well. Even books are less fashionable in universities these days than they were.

There was no area of student life which held that thrill of fun and outrage that was available to the young men of the Sixties. All the enjoyable outrages – drugs and sex particularly – had grown institutionalised. Even if you tried to take the only other way out, and gorge yourself to oblivion, you were restricted because all food was now either vegetarian and full of obscure beans purchased for next to nothing at the market that morning, or hamburgers with extra for our famous desert dressing. We had spent the best days of our lives climbing the steps, but now that we'd reached the door we found that originality and excitement had moved elsewhere.

Where have they moved? The answer is the most miserable and painfully ironic of all. The focus is now on the young, the aggressive, the unemployed. Inarticulacy is the pride of the street. If you've got an O level in woodwork, you're an over-educated prig, and the only cause worth the fight is yourself. So my generation missed the chance to be a hippy, and has now missed the chance to be a punk. There are students who fight against this void. All over the country, they can be seen walking to their next lecture dressed up à la punk, clutching their textbooks whilst adjusting the safety pin on their T-shirt. It's a sad sight, rather like a mother and father trying to imitate their children's modern dancing at a disco.

Being able to take no more, I decided to leave my university. Most others stayed on. Whilst packing my clothes, I remember humming one of my favourite Amen Corner songs:

> Bend me, shape me, anyway you want me,
> As long as you love me, it's all right.

* *Craig Brown left Bristol University last year.*

SEX PROBLEMS?

Sex and relationship counselling can help people who have sexual difficulties or suffer from sexual problems. Professional psychosexual therapy can help many woman who suffer from an inability to achieve orgasm and men who suffer from premature ejaculation. The Marie Stopes has regular clinics for individuals and couples seeking help, so if you feel you need professional advice ring 01-388 0662 for an appointment.

MARIE STOPES HOUSE
108 Whitfield Street, London, W 1. 01-388 0662
– A Clinic since 1925

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

First Person

Arthur Marshall

Name This Child

Down here in our pleasant Devonian backwater we are indeed remote and two or three decades ago we were remoter still. The village *blanchisseuse*, a word which seems to me more elegant than washerwoman, her mind unfuddled from childhood on either by education or newspapers or the wireless or intellectual chat, was informed by my mother of the sad death of George VI and then politely enquired who this unknown gentleman might be. Going, shortly after the war, into our tiny post-office (the postmistress skilfully doubled her postal duties with those of being at that time the only village butcher), I announced that I wanted to send a letter by air mail to America. There was considerable doubt behind the counter as to exactly where, or indeed what, America was. After some anxious searching in an unidentified post office instruction manual, the postmistress asked me whether America was in Mexico. 'No,' I said, 'it's more or less right out on its own.'

In these circumstances, those of us who ever left the village, even just for a daring day trip into Exeter, were considered to be great gadabouts. When I first came to Appleton in 1945, I found that a splendid lady called Mrs Spicer had a tremendous local reputation as a traveller. She didn't look much like a traveller, but then perhaps even Marco Polo himself was outwardly disappointing and seemed like somebody come to collect the money owing on the coloured telly. Anyway, there was nowhere, it was said, however far distant and virtually unreachable that Mrs Spicer had not been, and one pictured the intrepid globe-trotter canoeing up the Amazon, striding along the Great Wall of China, or squatting among aboriginees in the Outback, sharing a tuckerbag by the billabong. Keen to discover on what this reputation for dauntless travel was based, I made tactful inquiries and found that Mrs Spicer had been twice by train to Scarborough. She has now left the village and moved 35 miles to Plympton – on the go again, you see. You just can't pin that woman down.

Little things please, we are told, little minds, a fact which explains why I am almost permanently in merry mood and, chuckling and wheezing and guffawing, a repellent sight to see. As my part, so to speak, of the bargain, I can effortlessly supply the little mind, and the little things to please it are to be found on every side. For example, plunging a day or so ago into our rightly crowded and multi-purpose Boots in Exeter for some medical requirements (anything medical is these days thought to be morbidly interesting, but I am afraid that it was only Band-aids, Disprin and a jumbo Macleans), I passed the scent display and saw, hung above it, an encouraging notice saying SELECT YOUR FAVOURITE FRAGRANCE HERE. Impossible to explain why the refined combination of 'select' and 'fragrance' should have delighted me, but it did.

Modern parents, called upon to supply Christian names for their children, have, heaven knows, a wide enough choice and quite frequently settle for the unusual and the exotic. I am surprised that no couple has, to the best of my knowledge and after a life-long study of the Births columns, made use of Fragrance as a name to bring out at the font ('At "Dormers", Bagshot, to Boris and Doreen Hitchcock, the gift of a daughter – Fragrance Glenda'). Has it ever been used? While the middle-aged Monas and Monicas gaze in amazement at today's Sarahs and Emmas and vice versa (particularly vice versa), let us examine the works of Angela Brazil, that supreme realist in all matters concerning girlhood. The fact that there is no Fragrance that I can find after diligent search through the entire canon may merely mean that Miss Brazil didn't happen to think of it. Take, for instance, *A Popular Schoolgirl*, a story which finds this unique authoress at the very height of her great powers. We are at Grovebury School, its new buildings recently flung open by Queen Mary herself. Headmistress: Miss Burd. School colours: orange and navy-blue. Although the games captain's name is Blossom Webster (rather given to saying 'Cheery-ho!' but simply A.1 with her lax stick), and there are good run-of-the-mill girls called Gladys Roper and Verity Richmond, the heroine, and by far the most interesting character, is Quenrede Saxon, who finds the daily round at Grovebury 'extra tiptop and thrillsome' and has to fight off attempts to transform Quenrede into Queenie. It takes a strong nerve to bring out a strong name such as Quenrede but it must be remembered that neither Miss Brazil nor her readers saw anything remotely comical in names. Or, indeed, in any other aspects of this matchless fiction. And quite right too.

Well then, in *The Jolliest Term on Record*, Miss Brazil is even more adventuresome. The married headmistress of 'Aireyholme', who is 'a trifle masculine in appearance' and terrifies everybody with her steely blue eyes, has a daughter called Ermengarde, and even the most ordinary of the other girls come out as Gwethyn Marsden, Gladwin Riley, Coralie Nelson and Mélanie de Boeck (from Belgium). The book has both its thoughtful moments ('It's a shame that some should be rich and some poor') and its jolly ones ('Let's ask Miss Aubrey to our cocoa party!') and one's heart goes out to poor little Githa Hamilton, attacked, as you'll recall, by a savage bull while on her bicycle but displaying great pluck. In all her stories, Miss Brazil flinched at nothing, least of all remarkable names but in case it should be imagined that the invention of schoolgirl names is a simple task, let me place before you the work of somebody who tried it on but sadly failed.

Frank Richards, famous creator of that monstrous schoolboy fatty, W. Bunter, was bold enough to venture forth, thinly disguised as 'Hilda Richards', into Brazil country. He should really have known better and falsity rears its head from the start. One of the Board of Governors of his Cliff House School is called Miss Angelina Pilkington. Did you ever hear of anything so bogus? She is plainly an imposter and either a German spy or a confidence trickster with her eye on the headmistress's (Miss Primrose, of all feeble names for a headmistress) cashbox. Nor is this all. The French mistress is Mademoiselle Lupin and there is a girl called Dolly Joblin. This won't do either, and nor will Marcia Loftus nor the alliterative muddles into which 'Hilda' gets herself – Freda Foote, Stella Stone (school captain) and the totally repulsive Bessie Bunter, Billy's deplorable sister. There is in addition a male school porter called Piper, a most unsatisfactory appointment in every way and made, I can only suppose, by the hopeless Miss Primrose, and we are asked to believe that a girl called Clara Trevlyn would mount an errand-boy's motor-bicycle and pursue the drill mistress, Miss Bullivant, round the grounds. I doubt if Miss Brazil was even aware of motor-bicycles.

But at least, ever anxious to be of use to readers, I have provided some attractive suggestions for those recently experiencing the joys of parenthood. Now, which shall it be for that warm little female bundle? Add on a surname to get the full lilt of the thing. Edna Macabee? Gloria Westinghouse? Blodwen Doubleday? Do remember that initials painted on tuck-boxes are going to be seen by all, and avoid Wendy Carstairs and Brenda Oliphant.

Roger Woddis

What Goes Up

Official assurances have been given that there is little danger of radiation from the Russian satellite which crashed in Canada last week.

Under the cold Canadian sky,
Where the wind cuts like a yellow knife
And frozen metal still has life,
Investigators heave a sigh
  And signal all is well.

Safe as houses, pure as a priest,
No risk from radiation burns,
No need for Grannie's nasty turns,
No cause for wild alarm – at least,
  As far as they can tell.

A danger, yes; excessive, no.
A fault in Cosmos 954
Is hardly going to lead to war,
And if we keep our readings low,
  It's bound to go away.

A garbage dump is not a tomb;
Ten thousand chunks of iron in space
Will benefit the human race.
'Alas! regardless of their doom –'
Oh, shut up, Mr Gray!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editor

Unions and Reactors

Sir, Since I have never been more courteously or patiently interviewed than by Jeremy Bugler recently, I am sorry to have to write in criticism of his article last week on nuclear matters. He writes of the Generating Board's welcome for the Government's decision to go ahead with two AGR stations now and a PWR in 1982 as if this reflects a recent wish to have some more nuclear stations on the network for the sake of it. He contrasts the Generating Board attitude, for example, to the ordering of Drax stage II (usually mistakenly referred to as Drax 'B'). That is a totally misleading presentation. The two AGR stations are replacements of two SGHWR stations which the Government originally decided to build in 1974! The construction of these two nuclear stations has, therefore, been delayed. They are in no sense a new addition to the planned capacity. (The same goes for a further nuclear station in 1982.) Drax stage II was also part of the planned increase of capacity but unlike the nuclear stations was brought forward in the timetable, not pushed back.

Later in his article, Jeremy Bugler refers to Frank Chapple and myself as 'looking forward to a highly centralised industrial society'. I certainly never expressed any such view and I doubt if Frank Chapple did. Jeremy Bugler does seem to want it both ways. Both Frank Chapple and myself demolished the argument that our unions support nuclear power for the jobs it will provide for our members – a stock approach to undermine the credibility of trade union support for nuclear power. 'Aha!' says Jeremy Bugler, 'So you are not interested in employment at all!' A solar power programme, he writes, would create 2½ times as many jobs as a nuclear programme but this we dismissed, he says, as peripheral to the 'highly centralised industrial society (we) look forward to'. My union has no view as such on the future industrial organisation of society. Personally I look forward to a decentralised industrial society. The difference between Jeremy Bugler and myself, I think, is that I am not prepared to advocate that – until I believe we have the technology to move to it without a catastrophic collapse in the standard of living of our population, whereas he believes there is such technology. If therefore he can demonstrate that alternative energy technologies *are* available on the scale and in the time required which are not a great deal more costly than anything we have at present, he will find there is no disagreement between us.

JOHN LYONS
General Secretary
Electrical Power Engineers' Association
Chertsey
Surrey

Death and Doctors

Sir, Three cheers for Donald Gould! As he so rightly says (NS 20 January) the attitude of 'Leave it to the doctor and don't ask awkward questions' simply will not do. The more that doctors take momentous decisions on their patients' behalf, the more important it is that such decisions should be the subject of informed public debate.

Nowadays, one of the most common objections to legalising voluntary euthanasia is to say, 'It's going on all the time anyway, so don't worry about it.' It would be hard to think of anything more conducive to public disquiet on the matter. Either euthanasia should *never* be done – then at least we'd know where we stood – or it should be legalised under the strictest conditions. That way, patients could be sure they would never be given it without their consent. Telling them to 'sit down and shut up' is undoubtedly *not* the best way to tackle the matter.

NICHOLAS REED
Voluntary Euthanasia Society
13 Prince of Wales Terrace
London W8

Social Use

Sir, Mr Simms makes a valid point (Letters 27 January) about the concept of 'socially useful' products in the context of the Lucas Combine's Corporate plan, which deserves an answer. Prima facie there is a problem over the apparent subjective nature of what can be regarded as socially useful or not.

If, however, the term is defined as that which on balance promotes the welfare of the community this objection can, I think, be overcome. Thus the motor car could be classed as socially useful if there were not so many of them, they ran on clean and plentiful fuel, they were safe and there were no alternative form of transport.

If on the other hand widespread car ownership results in traffic congestion, increasing accidents (dealt with by an overstretched National Health Service) polluted high streets, the depletion of limited oil reserves, road systems eating up the countryside, and adequate alternative transport, the use of additional cars to society can objectively be regarded as questionable (although they may retain their appeal for individual car owners).

In other words the concept implies a cost benefit analysis of products coming on to the market which takes into account the widest social considerations, including health environmental, employment, and ultimately political. From this standpoint perhaps socially *responsible* products is the more accurate expression.

STAN ROSENTHAL
Socialist Environment and Resources Association
9 Poland Street
London W1

Front in the West

Sir, The growth of the National Front in the South West of England to the point where it can be suggested that the NF may gain its first parliamentary seat in a rural area, as reported by Patrick Wintour and John Hughes (NS 13 January), has an unnerving historical precedent. In Germany in the mid-Twenties, when the Nazi Party was being rebuilt after Hitler's return from gaol, the decision was made to abandon the *Freikorps* style of revolutionary militarism and to try to build a solid base of democratic support among the urban working class. This so-called 'urban plan', which closely parallels the NF's tactics today in our cities, ended in the 1928 general election, when the Nazis failed miserably in urban areas (in Berlin they only got 1.4 per cent of the vote), but did well enough in rural areas to win 12 seats in the Reichstag under Germany's proportional representation system.

This unexpected result led to the Nazis' second change of tactics within two years: they became the party of conservatism and autocracy, trading on the fears of rural and middle-class voters at a time of deepening economic crisis. In 1930 the Nazis won 107 Reichstag seats and were on the road to power.

Obviously, comparisons between Germany in the Twenties and Britain a half-century later must be taken with a pinch of salt. What is perhaps more immediately worrying is the information that the NF in the South West has been getting funds from farmers who are disgruntled by their treatment under the Common Agricultural Policy: this is the first instance I can recall of the NF winning support from a specific vested interest – and it is surely the support of vested interests, whether farmers, the City, industry, organised labour, or whatever, that turns fringe political parties into major ones.

The livestock and dairy farmers of the South West have, as the article made clear, a genuine grievance: their political representatives – Tories, Liberals, and the National Farmers' Union – are committed to an EEC agricultural policy that does little for this country except enrich a handful of big grain farmers in East Anglia at the expense of everyone else, producers and consumers alike. The only cure that their representatives offer them, abolition of the Green Pound, is certain to be much worse than the disease.

But why does it have to be the NF that exploits this grievance? The Labour Government is committed to developing a better and fairer farm policy. Could not farmers be persuaded that switching their support to Labour, and not to a mangy pack of racists, would be a more practical way of getting a better deal?

CHRIS JONES
47 Blomfield Road
London W9

Novels of Fearful Symmetry

Sir, Will Malcolm Muggeridge accept that his Theatre of Fearful Symmetry (NS 20 January) may be, with all respect, a Theatre of the Absurd to an atheist?

It did seem to me a pity that his warranted attack on the distortion of past and current events in history books and the media should be circumscribed by the religious reference. The martyrdoms of Christ and many others in the course of human time surely promoted the right to personal belief and its importance as well as propagating this or that faith; it is a major shortcoming of those who write history or serve the media that they do not express personal beliefs, but are more concerned with disseminating the myths of their particular culture.

For myself, I have found the most adequate explanation of our 20th-century civilisation in the fiction of the better novelists, say, of Evelyn Waugh, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Mulk Raj Anand and V. S. Naipaul. Moreover, looking back on the 19th century as well, it appears to me that the novel, of all the popular media, has most successfully preserved its integrity and most directly exploited its aesthetic potential to place the absurdities of human existence against the fearful symmetry of human expectation.

CHARLES H. ARCHIBALD
Newton Stewart
Wigtownshire

Berufsverbot

Sir, I was very interested in Stephen Atkinson's article (NS 20 January) on 'Germany's State of Siege'. He gives, I think, a very fair picture of what is happening in the Federal Republic, but I should like to correct the impression he gives of the scope of victimisation. He quotes the dubious 'official' figures of the number of people investigated and the number victimised. These figures are not accepted as accurate and obscure the real scale of what the *Observer*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has called 'this shocking measure', the *Radikalenerlass*. It was reported at a widely attended conference in Oldenburg in November last that in the last six years 1,300,000 public service employees or applicants had been 'investigated' by the political police (*Verfassungsschutz*) and that 4,000 had been dismissed or refused employment as a result.

Stephen Atkinson also seems to suggest that the provisions of Articles 2, 5 and 18 of the Constitution support the practitioners of *Berufsverbot*. But the pacifists, communists, socialists and trade unionists who are being victimised *are* loyal to the Constitution and *do* support 'the free democratic basic order'. It is, I submit, misleading to suggest that this is not so.

Blatant disregard of the law of the Constitution by supporters of the *Radikalenerlass* is demonstrated in the case of the Christian pacifist Heinrich Haeberlein. The result of his appeal to the Administrative Court against his rejection as a teacher was reported in the *Guardian* on 25 January. The Court upheld his rejection on the grounds of his membership of the German Peace Society, a pacifist organisation. The judgment also stated that although he was not 'an enemy of the Constitution', he and other applicants should be rejected if they were thought to display indifference to the Constitution. Anyone who wanted to enter the public service had to be a convinced anti-Communist. (Nazis, old or new, would obviously be welcome, they might well have added.) This is a dangerous and not isolated case of reactionary judges making new law. There is nothing in the law of the Constitution to support such action.

HUGH LATHAM
Secretary
Provisional Committee Against Berufsverbot
6 Little Green Lane
Farnham, Surrey

No Fun

Sir, Corinna Adam opened her piece on the Young National Front last week with some unfounded remarks about the slogan 'NF – No Fun'. For her, the slogan may reek of 'liberal self-esteem', but for the generation in question there is an alternative inference. 'No Fun' is a song, written by the 'godfather of punk' Iggy Pop, and popularised by the Sex Pistols, who chose it for the B-side of their single 'Pretty Vacant' last summer. Because the same social circumstances have generated both punk and the rise of the National Front, and because the two have some adherents and modes of expression in common; 'No Fun' coupled with another Sex Pistols catchphrase 'No future' was, in fact, one of the most *relevant* anti-fascist slogans of 1977.

RUSS WILLEY
65 Packer Avenue
Leicester

Lucas Classicus

Sir, Since he refers to me personally, may I say I cannot accept Patrick Wintour's (NS 20 January) accusation of Government lethargy over the Lucas Aerospace Shop Stewards' Corporate Plan?

We have made it abundantly clear in innumerable letters to MPs and other interested parties that we very much welcome the idea of workers getting together to put forward positive proposals for the future of their company. In an effort to get the Lucas shop stewards' initiative moving forward, Ministers here and at the Department of Employment have repeatedly met backbench MPs, raised the subject with trade unionists and sought clarification from the company management.

In the end, though, the main reason why so little progress has been made is the failure of the combine itself to use the proper channels that already exist both in their own unions and in the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions for this kind of discussion. If the shop stewards want discussions of the plan with the company's central management, there is only one way that can happen democratically and that is through a properly constituted body involving all the interested unions. That is why, for almost a year now, Ministers have been urging the shop stewards to work through the Confed.

Individual unions and the Confed. can only take up the Corporate Plan if they are asked by the appropriate elected union representatives. So the way ahead is clear.

LES HUCKFIELD
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department of Industry
1 Victoria Street
London SW1

Arthur in Error

Sir, It is unlike our dear Mr Marshall (NS 27 January) to perpetuate a vulgar error. Had he ever 'sidled nervously up the aisle' and squeaked 'I do' he would not have been married. Nowhere in the marriage service is either bride or bridegroom required to say 'I do' though 60 per cent of the nation's bridegrooms believe they must. The question put to them is 'Wilt thou . . .' not 'Dost thou . . .' so the answer is 'I will'.

But then not only has Mr Marshall never married, as he now reveals to his stupefied public, he has clearly never attended a wedding in church. At no properly organised nuptials would the bridegroom sidle through guest-filled pews: he and the best man would be there virtually before everyone else. And, of course, whatever the bridegroom squeaks out he does it not at the altar steps but at the chancel steps. Mr Marshall should get Cousin Madge to vet his writings on such matters. Ladies, even if unmarried, usually know best. He need not let her read the more fleshy passages. And I'm sure that as her share of the takings she would be more than pleased to be given one of his scented candles.

DENIS SHAW
Clewer Rectory
Windsor

No Bodmin Marxism

Sir, 'There are certainly no Marxist teachers here', the Headmaster of Bodmin School tells you (Letters 27 January). How does he know? Has he asked them or have they volunteered the information? Do they have to tell him if asked? What happens if a Marxist applies for a vacancy on his staff?

ANDREW KIRKBY
Little Shelford
Cambridge

A Liberal Writes

Sir, It was with obvious regret that Crucifer (20 January) had to concede that it was David Steel's weekend. Pity he had to join the ranks of stargazers he chose to condemn – but there – journalists must stick together mustn't they? Hutchinson to the Tories – Nesta to the backwoods and Crucifer to his crystal ball. Here's hoping they enjoy each other's company.

DAVID AUSTICK
Chairman
Liberal Candidates Association
Cross Green
Otley, West Yorks.

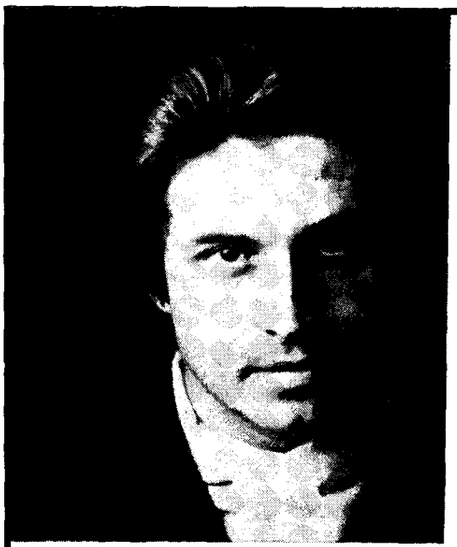
Letter Tupper

Sir, The really amusing thing about your Competition no. 2496 is the thought that some scores of adults, men and women, racked their brains and their Roget devising *double-entendres* to titillate Grubby Tupper, the fourth-year schoolboy, and Squashy Tupper, the senile dement.

JAMES R. LITTLE
190 Ferry Road
Edinburgh

Sir, Your Competition setters ask for filth and get it – indeed seem to set their puerile puzzles with no other intention in mind. The crudities of the Tuppers have delighted those on your staff whose humour rises no higher than third-form smut. If the new editor produces no new Competition setters, he will have lost at least one reader.

EDITH SIMPSON
(fed-upper than usual)
Rosebourn House
Huby, Leeds



Riccardo Muti

Riccardo Muti, the dynamic Principal Conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra writes:

"My activity as Principal Conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra has enabled me to know and appreciate the high professional standard and enthusiastic dedication with which British musicians approach their work, a work which provides cultural enrichment and spiritual wellbeing for others that no price can pay. We can thank them by making certain that those whose professional artistic life has ended through illness or accident continue to live in dignity and serenity. Our help can ensure that their sacrifices do not receive misery and hardship as their only prize."

Please send a donation, large or small. It will help to maintain our three homes of residence for elderly and retired musicians and will give comfort to many who long for your support.

Sir Thomas Armstrong, Chairman,
MUSICIANS' BENEVOLENT FUND
16 Ogle Street, London W1P 7LG.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Clive James

A State of Boredom

Brezhnev: A Short Biography by THE INSTITUTE OF MARXISM-LENINISM, CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE *Pergamon Press* £5

Here is a book so dull that a whirling dervish could read himself to sleep with it. If you were to recite even a single page in the open air, birds would fall out of the sky and dogs drop dead. There is no author's name on the title page, merely a modest line of italic type advising us that Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev's 'short biography' has been composed 'by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, CPSU Central Committee'. This is the one statement in the entire opus which is undeniably true. Only an Institute could write like this:

> Monumental progress in building communism has been made by the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party, its Central Committee and Politburo headed by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's Central Committee, LEONID ILYICH BREZHNEV.

Monumental progress in probing the outer limits of tedium has been made by the time the hypnotised reader has slogged through more than 200 pages of ideological prose at its most glutinous. Unable to believe that the Institute could keep down the pace, I read the whole thing from start to finish, waiting for the inevitable slip-up which would result in a living sentence. It never happened. That the book could be read from any other motive seems highly unlikely. Even the most rabid Brezhnev fan would be catatonic by the end of the first chapter.

It is safe to predict that sales will not be large. What, then, does Robert Maxwell hope to gain from the deal? Brezhnev has contributed a foreword graciously mentioning Maxwell by name. Perhaps that's enough. But leaving aside any suspicion that the chairman of Pergamon Press has finally mislaid the last of his marbles, there are grounds for according him a vote of thanks. If nothing else had ever done so, this book would be more than enough to prove that boredom is not just incidental to Soviet life, but fundamental. Boredom is built into the Soviet system. The Soviet system runs on boredom. Boredom and the Soviet system are the same thing.

State-induced ennui on the Soviet scale is not something we can easily imagine. We think we are being bored when we chance to tune in on a television programme starring Sir Harold Wilson, or when we accidentally stumble on a short quotation from Edward Heath's latest book. Our own marxists are fond of telling us that such mendacious bathos is ultimately more corroding than whatever drabness might occasionally make itself manifest behind the Iron Curtain. But really there is no comparison. What you have to imagine is being *forced* to listen, your whole life long, to stuff like the following paragraph, chosen at random from page 61 of the life story of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's Central Committee.

> The plenum once again proved convincingly the CPSU's monolithic unity, its stand on Leninist principles, and its political maturity. It demonstrated the fidelity of the Party and its Central Committee to Marxism-Leninism and expressed the unswerving determination of Communists to adhere to and develop steadfastly the Leninist standards of Party life and the principles of Party leadership, notably that of collective leadership, and boldly and resolutely to set aside every impediment to the creative work of Party and people.

But once again it is not enough to say that the Institute's style is devoid of interest. What the Institute's style is devoid of is truth. In fact so thoroughly has the truth been siphoned out that you might even find yourself getting interested in the consequent vacuum. James Joyce used to say that he had never met a boring man, and I suppose that by the same criterion there is no such thing as a boring book: even trash raises questions – among them, the question of how it came to exist. From that viewpoint, Brezhnev's Brief Bio is unputdownable. Every euphemism, circumlocution, outright omission and flat lie is an eloquent testimonial to the Soviet government's regard for the truth. The Soviet government has such a high regard for the truth that it will go to almost any lengths to ensure that the common people never get even a smell of it. Hence the care with which the Institute makes the facts unintelligible even when they don't matter.

The Institute, in a solitary burst of candour, makes it reasonably clear that the Ukrainian town of Kamenskoye, nowadays called Dneprodzerzhinsk, was favoured on 19 December 1906 with the birth of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev. After that the story gets a bit blurred. There is much emphasis on his early career as a steel-worker, but what really mattered was his climb through the ranks of the Komsomol and the Party. He grew up as a member of the 'first generation of builders of socialism' who 'were remodelling the country's agriculture on socialist lines and carrying out a cultural revolution'. Millions of people whose existence might have impeded such a process had already been wiped out, but there is no mention of these, beyond a blanket statement that 'trends hostile to Leninism . . . were overwhelmed in this struggle'. It could be said that those particular millions of victims have no relevance to this story. But later on there were further millions of victims whose relevance to this story is beyond question, and there is no mention of them either.

Brezhnev's heroism as a soldier during the Great Patriotic War is heavily underlined, but first there is the sensitive topic of what he was up to during the years immediately preceding. The Institute calls it 'Party work'. By 1939 he was 'propaganda secretary' of the local Regional Committee. It appears that he 'ran extensive campaigns among the Communists and all working people for the successful implementation of the tasks set by the Party'. This, remember, was the Ukraine, and the tasks set by the Party were the brain-children of Stalin. They consisted mainly of rounding people up and shipping them off to be killed. How, you might wonder, does the Institute get around the unarguable fact that Brezhnev was faithfully engaged in carrying out Stalin's lethal plans? And then as you read on and on you gradually realise. *There is no mention of Stalin at all.*

But here comes the war, during which 'Communists were everywhere in the forefront'. More to the forefront than almost anybody was Leonid Ilyich, variously 'deputy chief of the Southern Front's political department' and 'chief of the political department of the 18th Army of the 4th Ukrainian Front'. Brezhnev spared no efforts in his task of 'instilling in Soviet troops a spirit of utter devotion to the socialist homeland and hatred for its enemies'. The Institute doesn't explain why it should have been so necessary to instil this hatred, unless the devotion to the socialist homeland wasn't all it might have been.

Anyway, Brezhnev, as a leading member of the political organs, 'stimulated the morale, political consciousness, fortitude and courage of the troops in the heavy fighting'. The citation for his first Order of the Red Banner in 1942 described how he had 'often visited the troops at their battle stations'. He was 'a fearless political worker'. By 1943 Colonel Brezhnev was in charge of all the 18th Army's political instructors. The Institute seems to be in no doubt that the Party won the war with the help of the army. Nowhere is it suggested in this book, and in no book published in the Soviet Union has it ever been suggested at any time, that the Party's heroic efforts were mainly devoted to supplying deficiencies which the Party had caused in the first place.

The Party having brought the war to a successful conclusion, Brezhnev 'took part in liberating Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary'. With the passing of 'the cult of personality' (i.e. Stalin), Brezhnev was obliged to switch bandwagons. There is not much data from any source, and none at all from this one, on how he managed it, but connoisseurs of grotesque euphemism will be pleased to learn that as the man in charge of transforming the Kazakhstan virgin lands in 1954-55 Brezhnev inspired 'the thousands who came from all parts of the Soviet Union' with creative fervour. One of the places they came to, of course, was Karaganda.

How does the Institute deal with the awkward fact that Brezhnev was Khruschev's man? Easy. *There is no mention of Khruschev at all.* Instead, 'it was necessary to remove the subjectivism which was in evidence at that time'. The subjectivism having been removed, the way was eventually clear for this 'outstanding political personality of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Leninist type' to assume power. There is no telling, certainly not from this source, quite how he did it, but Brezhnev made it all the way to the top, and set about ensuring that he stayed there.

There are probably no exceptions to the rule that power corrupts, but Brezhnev can perhaps be cited as evidence that absolute power need not necessarily corrupt absolutely. His power by now is as absolute as anyone's has ever been, but he has not gone mad with it, although there can be no doubt that he is an ugly customer. Dubcek and the other Czech leaders were personally favoured with a sample of what Brezhnev is like when he is putting on the squeeze, since he it was who did most of the shouting down the telephone. But generally he has gone about his business with such tact as to make it appear that a monopoly of power has dropped into his lap impelled by nothing more assertive than gravitational force.

Brezhnev, the Institute assures us, has eliminated 'the consequences of the personality cult and manifestations of subjectivism and voluntarism'. This is good to hear, even if it is bad to read. There is something to it. Compared with, say, Kim Il Sung, Brezhnev can even be said to have kept a low profile. But the appearance of this biography should be enough to start people wondering. My own view, for what it is worth, is that Brezhnev is just as keen on himself as Stalin was, but has a more acute sense of what he can get away with without having himself written out of Soviet history. He wants his immortality to last, like Lenin's.

As a philosophical brain Brezhnev is no better than Stalin. Indeed at times he sounds just like him, especially when he contends, in the same paragraph, (a) that scientific and industrial progress can be attained only through socialism, and (b) that socialism can be attained only through scientific and industrial progress. He is also as vain as Stalin: the photograph on the jacket of this book is retouched to suit the self-delusions of a man who can't pass a mirror. But he is less nuts than Stalin. During Brezhnev's reign the innocent have been permitted to live, as long as they don't heckle. Even at its mildest, totalitarianism is never less murderous than that: a society in which the rulers talk on and on without making any sense, but nobody is allowed to laugh.

Julian Barnes

Meeting the King of Bum

Diaries 1949-69 by MAURICE COLLIS edited by Louise Collis *Heinemann* £5.50

In 1972 Maurice Collis, then in his eighties, introduced himself to Edward Heath at a William Nicholson exhibition with his own epitaph: 'I am Maurice Collis. I have written 35 books, some of which were considered bolshy in their day, but I believe there is nothing in any of them that a modern conservative would object to.' The prolific and professional biographer of Raffles, Stanley Spencer and Siamese White never quite got over the fact that Britain was not old China, and that men of letters were not automatically accorded respect (Heath, according to the acute Louise Collis, listened 'with apparent interest . . . His hand was warm and soft as a woman's. His eyes were a deep sea blue and profoundly agitated'). Throughout his diaries, Collis seems jumpy and carping about the famous ('not much of a head or a presence'; 'though a classical double first, he does not look cultivated'); and with rival writers the tone becomes positively pettish. He is dissatisfied with C. S. Forester – 'his appearance was not that of a man of culture or character'; with Empson, who 'spoke to me in a manner which I found very eccentric'; with Somerset Maugham:

> His appearance is . . . undistinguished. We had a short conversation . . . I told him that I had long been one of his regular readers and had read his stories many times. He did not speak of my books.

There is something sad, as well as faintly ridiculous, in the way Collis's pride exceeds his talent, and also in his defensive emphasis on correct behaviour and appearance. Yet if he himself was not more highly valued, it was partly because he wasn't really interested in writing. The few literary judgments he makes in these diaries are routine and dutiful; his main passions and energies are social. Glamour, for Collis, consisted not in meeting T. S. Eliot by chance, but in lunching *à deux* with the Princess Fahrunissa ('an elaborate meal of lobster and turkey was served on solid-silver plates'). His priorities, if limiting, are not that strange: writers are as susceptible as anyone else to social goosing, titles, fine wine, servants and investment income.

The central characters of the diaries are the Astors – William (the Third Viscount) and his mother Nancy. Collis was frequently summoned to dine at Cliveden, and can be seen checking in his sense of judgment with his hat and stick. The Profumo affair, by his account, was primarily a tragedy for the Astor family. Nancy, for him, was a characterful if sometimes difficult lady; yet in what he actually writes down, despite himself, the old crone is largely occupied with making things hot for her son, upstaging her daughters-in-law, cook-stealing, bossily interfering and fiercely indulging her egotism and snobbery. Collis records her *mot* that 'the welfare state may be the farewell state' and her 'saying that people so coddled could not survive in this hard world' immediately after a caressing description of her opulent drawing-room ('old masters on the wall, very valuable period French furniture, cabinets of continental porcelain, an immense carved Chinese lacquer screen . . .'). Neither the ex-dockyard MP nor the ex-subversive Rangoon magistrate spots any niggling incongruity.

There are, happily, more amusing and observant moments. Julian Huxley's ridiculous 70th-birthday party – at which the sage paraded in his red doctoral gown with a laurel wreath on his head, and made a long speech retailing the principal events of his life – is written up in lively fashion; and Collis's account of meeting all the 'black Kings of Darkest Africa' at Claridges in 1958 is delightfully bizarre:

> I sat down on the sofa and asked a Negro to write down his name. It was The Fon of Bum. I said to him: 'Your hat is remarkable.' He said: 'Only kings or the sons of kings may wear such a hat.' I said: 'Are you a king or the son of a king?' He said: 'I am a king. I am the King of Bum.' I said: 'I suppose that in Bum it would not be done for a man to seat himself with you on a sofa as I have done.' He said: 'The fine for that is fixed at £35.' He was an agreeable king and was enjoying himself.

And then, ten pages from the end, there comes the most surprising entry in the book: 'At 7 a.m. my wife, Eleanor, came into my room and said she was suffering a violent pain in the stomach . . .' This is the first mention of Collis's wife in 18 years; two days, and two entries, later she is dead. It is a reminder of the deceptiveness and partiality of diaries, of how much less they tell us than the average biography. The form looks candid and unbuttoned, with the writer at ease with himself; in fact, it has as many artifices and conventions as the novel. A second reminder of

EVELYN WAUGH
A LITTLE ORDER
A selection from his journalism, edited with an introduction by Donat Gallagher

'Ironic, mischievous, intended to disconcert . . . essays elegant, succulent, razor edged.'
Peter Lewis, *Daily Mail*

'Witty, terse, controlled, admirable . . . natural wit, the striving for grace, the rhythms of authority make this book literature.'
Anthony Burgess, *Observer*

£5.50
EM EYRE METHUEN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this comes with Louise Collis's note that her father had 'numerous love affairs' in the years covered by his diaries. But he drops no hint about identities, occasions, feelings. Should we try to read his enthusiastic accounts of food, cutlery and fabrics as metaphors, sublimations of the lover's gleeful descriptions of flesh and its doings? Perhaps; though Collis himself would hardly have agreed: in behaviour (even adultery), as in writing, he constantly aspired to correctness, with all the advantages and drawbacks this entails.

Peter Conrad

Slush Fund

Now Barabbas was a Rotter: The Extraordinary Life of Marie Corelli by BRIAN MASTERS *Hamish Hamilton* £6.95

Brian Masters has written a fine biography of a woman he detests. He begins by explaining that Marie Corelli was not even his choice: he'd been rebuked by A. L. Rowse for his ignorance of her, and the biography is an act of reparation, immolating its subject in order to win back the approbation of Dr Rowse. It is a good book, but it suffers from its rebarbativeness. Marie Corelli is an exasperating subject, a luridly bad writer and a venomously difficult and vulgar character, but the biographer even of a monster ought at least to begin as an advocate – since only sympathy will guarantee comprehension. Mr Masters mocks her amusingly and deconstructs her with glib Freudian sleight-of-hand, but, because he can nowhere concede her the benefit of the doubt, he doesn't come near to explaining either her commercial success or her critical failure. Even his ill-advised title is a jeer, and such an unintelligible one that it requires the addition of a palliative subtitle: 'Now Barabbas was a rotter' is a phrase from a review of a perfervid Corelli novel about the Crucifixion.

Corelli was an inveterate liar. She invented a name, as Mr Masters says, and then invented a life to go with it. Expunging her drab suburban identity as Minnie Mackay, she claimed descent from the aesthetic aristocracy of Venice, and, having installed herself at Stratford-upon-Avon, imported a bibulous gondolier to row her on the river. She faked connections with European royalty; she even made the camera lie on her behalf: discontented with her small stature, she had herself strategically photographed on staircases, where the hem of her dress could sweep down several steps below her obscured feet, and then tampered with the negatives to erase those wrinkles, puffs and purses of flesh which gave her the look, in Cyril Connolly's appalling phrase, of 'a bulldog in ectoplasm'. These evasions and impostures enrage Mr Masters, who bristles even at this distance: describing her precocity, he adds, 'how irritating it was to have to deal with a child who made no secret that she thought she was brilliant, can only be imagined'.

He complains that she had no faculty for self-criticism, or for sensitive comprehension of the feelings of others, and he undertakes to supply both in a nagging commentary. But his compassion for Corelli's victims is a waste of emotion: he pities those who, like her confidant Bertha Vyers, seem not to have pitied themselves; he is outraged on behalf of her servants, meanly provided for by her will, though he admits that they didn't consider themselves entitled to more than the pittance left to them. And his severity hinders his understanding of the enigma of Corelli. Her dishonesty has another justification. Mendacity is the poor man's version of imagination: the poet can transform the world, the poetaster can only pretend it is transformed, and enforce the pretence by telling lies. The artist, like Adam, awakes and finds his dream come true; Corelli had to will her dreams into truth by suppressing an obnoxious reality. Attacking the squalor of Zola, she argued that 'the things that were called imaginary were often more real than what is called realism', and her own fibs and frauds, which so annoy Mr Masters, are the baffled protests of imagination against a refractory and unworthy truth.

Corelli had the imperious temperament of genius without the creativity to go with it. She was more interested in the vainglorious business of being an artist than in the laborious production of works of art: hence her amateurism, trifling with careers as an improvisatory virtuoso on the piano (for which she lacked the technical skill) and as an actress before she settled on novel-writing. Mr Masters is quick to spot inconsistencies of attitude in her behaviour, but doesn't see that confusion is the secret attraction of fiction like Corelli's. He smirks when she forgets her own prudery to campaign against the bowdlerising of Shakespeare; but her novels intriguingly combine lewd suggestiveness and prim caution, both indulging fantasy and restraining it. The inconsistency Mr Masters punishes is the life of bad writing, which permits readers the chimerical freedom of two opposed attitudes. Slushy inspecific eroticism like Corelli's is a domestication of romantic passion: her novels arouse the emotions, but apologise for the venery they exploit by dissipating it in prudent rhetoric.

For all her highmindedness, Corelli belongs in Steven Marcus's underworld of Victorian pornographers, since pornography specialises in the harmless inflammation of fantasy as a substitute for sexual action. Hers are one-hand books, more pernicious (as one of her critics suggested) than the vices they sanctimoniously inveigh against, because they pander to a lasciviousness which is entirely mental. Corelli herself was a life-long virgin: her empurpled and tumescent imagination is a sure sign of frigidity. But Masters is disappointing about the novels. Considering them beneath critical contempt, he either quotes without comment, as if standing back agape, or contents himself with giggly speeded-up plot-synopses. However, as the MGM hack told Gore Vidal, 'shit has its own integrity', and bad books are often more ingeniously constructed, more guileful in their deceits and lapses of faith, than good ones, simply because they are the products of market research, not wayward creative inspiration. Semiological critics were after all raised on the study of kitsch. Trash like Corelli's can be understood only if it is taken seriously.

Though critically reticent, Masters is good on her activities as a publicist: her relentless self-advertisement, her persecution of disloyal publishers and scornful reviewers, her subsidiary careers as a social climber and a patriotic lecturer. She was so adept at self-promotion that she could court celebrity by ostentatiously protecting her anonymity: like Garbo, she knew that no publicity is the best publicity, as she explained to a newspaper which had agreed not to publish an illicit snapshot of her – 'now I can assume to be a sort of "veiled prophet", doubly mysterious'; and on the same principle she publicised her novels by forbidding the circulation of review copies. Gladstone, paying a courtesy call, told her that 'fiction is a powerful factor in the education of the people', and she too interpreted her success politically, turning her sales figures into a plebiscite: 'the great masses of the public in all nations are always led by some instinctive sense of right, that moves them to reject the false and unworthy, and select the true.' She was less an artist than a literary demagogue, mobilising the masses to buy her novels or tickets for her lectures, and thus a creature of a new kind in the history of literature. Brian Masters writes about her entertainingly, but not very perceptively.

Stephen Koss

Locust Years

The Slump by CHRIS COOK and JOHN STEVENSON *Cape* £8.95

Bounded by the impact of the international monetary collapse on the one side and by the outbreak of the second world war on the other, the Thirties seem to qualify to a far greater extent than most decades as a discrete historical entity. As such, they have had the worst press of any period within living memory. The epithets that continue to attach to these years are damning and not necessarily inapposite. A 'low and dishonest' age of wasted opportunities, a 'Devil's Decade' of private hardships and public humiliations inflicted by inept statesmen, the Thirties were effectively stigmatised as 'the locust years' by Churchill, whose own career may be cited as a case in point.

It remains unclear from chapter to chapter, sometimes from page to page, whether John Stevenson and Chris Cook mean to refute or simply to qualify this unflattering image. Both versatile scholars, who have hitherto distinguished themselves chiefly as essayists, they are of course too young to recall the experiences of their parents, 'who lived through the worst years of the Slump' and to whom this book is dedicated. The authors' youth ought not to be held against them: lacking first-hand impressions,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

John Stevenson and Chris Cook compensate by their own intensive research and by their mastery of published sources. That, to some degree, may account for the ambivalence of their approach.

Perhaps reflecting its dual authorship, this book is episodic in structure and somewhat stinting in its judgments. In their attempt to illustrate 'the paradox which lay at the heart of Britain in the Thirties', the authors pit one authority against another and dwell on the differences in contemporary circumstances and perspectives. After adeptly pointing up the contradictions in the evidence, they appear to have been daunted by their own success. Consequently, their generalisations are few and, at that, tentative and predictable. It is always easier to challenge 'myth' than to establish 'reality'.

With scant attention to the economic causes of the Slump, which lay chronologically and geographically beyond its province, this study offers an impressive account of its ramifications in social and electoral affairs. As a general survey of the period, which it occasionally aspires to be, it is rather less satisfactory. There are some incisive discussions of various popular trends and organised movements which Stevenson and Cook have respectively treated elsewhere. As one would expect of two historians who have imbibed the traditions of Nuffield College, Oxford, where indeed this project was spawned, there are also some detailed exercises in psephology, the analysis of voting patterns and political alignments. But the components are more conjoined than integrated. Like one of those motor-cars whose record production is held to symbolise the persistence of affluence during the depression, the book tends to jerk and even to stall when it changes gears.

By no means insensitive to the deprivation and discontent more usually associated with the 'Hungry Thirties', the authors attempt to accentuate the positive without going so far as to eliminate the negative. Thus they emphasise that 'major social problems' – including mass unemployment and inadequate housing – were the unwelcome legacies of earlier times. The Slump doubtless exacerbated these conditions, but did not create them. While some areas stagnated, others enjoyed an unprecedented prosperity with the rise of new industries. There were important advances in diet and health, an increase in life expectancy, and a rise in the standard of living at least 'for those who remained in work'. As for the much-maligned National Government, while 'it could offer only palliatives' in response to distress, its economic policies were no more cautious than those of its Labour opponents; besides, its mere existence somehow 'provided a bulwark' against extremists on the Left and Right. An interesting hypothesis, it is vitiated by the further assertion that the legions of unemployed were as deaf to 'communist overtures' as they were 'largely immune to the appeals of fascism'. It may strike the Nuffield mind as 'a remarkable comment on the stability of British politics that, even when the Slump was at its worst, the electoral and political scene remained quiescent'. That, however, should come as no surprise. In 1886, when many of the same conditions and apprehensions prevailed, the Fabians were quick to realise that 'the revolt of the empty stomach ends at the baker's shop'.

If the years of the Slump were not so bleak, why such a reputation? Stevenson and Cook ascribe it, above all else, to the 'dole literature' that began to appear late in the decade, much of it under the imprint of the Left Book Club. They ignore not only the novels of Priestley, but also the poetry that ushered in the period. With due deference, they leave it to A. J. P. Taylor to put their case in a rhetorical question: 'which was more significant for the future – over a million unemployed or over a million private cars?' I am prepared to believe that the Thirties were not the Devil's Decade, but I have my hunch that Mr Taylor, a confirmed pedestrian, was playing devil's advocate.

Jonathan Keates

Was-Kid

Gilbert Cannan, A Georgian Prodigy by DIANA FARR *Chatto & Windus* £8.50

The annals of literary promise make dismal reading. Foremost among the might-have-beens and if-onlys come those stifled by death with a stroke of artistic ruthlessness when they have produced just enough to guarantee immortality. It is impossible to imagine, for instance, a balding, carpet-slippered Keats writing articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, Leopardi in a pasta-stained waistcoat turning out libretti to keep a noisy family, or Kleist as a bemedalled Herr Professor doffing his titfer to a Grand Duchess at a spa. There are others, the Radiguets, the Fourniers, from whom a single bright flicker may well have been sufficient. Biggest of all, however, is the class of writers from whom everything is expected and nothing turns up, winners of heady success and prisoners of the reading public's Circean caprice, which turns them into monsters of oblivion.

Someone, no doubt, has written, or will write, a doctoral thesis on the works of Gilbert Cannan, and somebody else will produce another biography. Since nearly all the characters and situations in his novels are very clearly related to figures and events in his own life, such studies hold interesting potential. Who then was he? Born in 1884, he followed Manchester Grammar and Cambridge with a spell as a barrister (at his death his wig was found mouldering in a box under the bed), fell in love with a girl who ditched him for Scott of the Antarctic, then lured J. M. Barrie's wife Mary into a divorce, destroyed his own marriage to her with a lunge at the parlour-maid, developed megalomania, and spent his last years in an asylum at Virginia Water for the well-heeled mad, where he died in 1955.

'We liked him and we trusted him, though we found him hard to understand,' wrote Middleton Murry. 'The centre of him seemed to be totally withdrawn and impenetrable.' Lytton Strachey, wrestling with Cannan's best novel, shrilled: 'The poor fellow is so modern and broadminded too, but oh! the taste! – and the pointlessness!' Lawrence dismissed him enigmatically at the end of a letter to Compton Mackenzie: 'Poor Gilbert – a soup frill.' Wells wrote admiringly of his treatment of puberty in *Round the Corner*, Ottoline Morrell, sniffing at talent like a truffle-hound, later searched 'the dark tunnels of my memory' for details of their friendship, and Henry James, in an inimitably opaque article in *The Times*, placed him with Lawrence, Mackenzie and Hugh Walpole as a rising man.

Fifteen years later he had still not risen. His novels, read eagerly enough by excited young Georgians, have joined those of H. de Vere Stacpoole, A. E. W. Mason and Francis Brett Young on the 10p. stacks of secondhand bookshops. Significantly the new Bloomsbury industry, though nodding interestedly at his portrait of Mark Gertler in *Mendel*, has passed him over for a respray. Thus it was bold of his second cousin once removed, Diana Farr, to attempt this timely and cautionary reminder. That she fails ultimately to commend either Cannan or his work to our attention is probably less her fault than her subject's. Apart from coining young Cupids with the maid, and the bizarre details of the Surrey sanatorium where patients dressed for dinner and held *thés dansants*, Cannan's life isn't *that* interesting. He emerges as a fairly humourless, though not altogether charmless figure, conventionally Bohemian and short on style. The quoted extracts from the novels fail to grab, and the poetry ('my thoughts like birds do flit') is simply embarrassing.

Ironically Mrs Farr's success is one she may not have aimed at. The value of her book, besides its grey-toned warning images of illusory triumph submerged in mental collapse, is in its replacement of Bloomsbury glitter with a *Crossroads*-like triviality. Celebrities make guest appearances as the Cannans' marriage creaks towards disaster. In one episode Lytton and Ottoline arrive, Barrie persuades Galsworthy to act as go-between, Granville Barker stages Gilbert's play. Don't miss our next, when Ottoline sends Mary a paperknife and everybody has fun with amateur theatricals in St John's Wood. This, you feel, is how it actually was, and the yawning mediocrity of most of it is summed up with unconscious precision in the author's detail, 'she played Mrs Crummins in St John Hankin's play *The Last of the De Mullins*'. The one name never mentioned, though constantly invoked by the juxtaposition of literature and madness, is the one most likely to send Cannan spinning into the shade: that of Virginia Woolf.

If you love words,

you'll love VERBATIM, with its articles, book reviews, and correspondence about the English Language. Send £2.75 for a year's subscription *4 issues* to:

VERBATIM

Laurence Urdang Limited

2a Market Square, Aylesbury, Bucks.

Refund in full if not pleased with first issue

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

John Sturrock

(,-:;.?!)

You Have a Point There by ERIC PARTRIDGE *Routledge & Kegan Paul* £2.50

Eric Partridge's ample and vivacious 'guide to punctuation and all its allies' could make more educated punctuators of us all – deft with our dashes, confident in our colons (and I write, let it be known parenthetically, as someone chasteningly faulted by the literary editor of the NS for asking too much of the comma; when that more aggressive sign, the semi-colon, was called for). The book is not a new one, written to supply our present grievous need; it first came out in 1953 when, even though not everyone would have believed it at the time, punctuation was apparently alive and well. Partridge in fact maintains that the standard had risen very creditably since the beginning of the century, when punctuation was 'less various, less discriminating, less subtle'. Since it is none of those three desirable things today, we have been backsliding fast these 25 years. In tune with other of our fumbling institutions, punctuation is sick; and Partridge's optimism, that its use is becoming more rational all the time, re-reads now as quite misplaced.

In the ascendant when this book was written, punctuation is now in decline; but this cycle of cultivation and neglect is probably not a new one. The history of punctuation reveals pretty movements of taste – the colon, long an unfavoured, somewhat labile stop, came strongly back into intelligent use after its cause was promoted by Fowler in 1926. But I doubt whether it is fashion that is killing off punctuation with us so much as pig ignorance. Many whose writing is seen in public do not know which stops to use or where, logically, to place them; many is the sentence whose sense collapses because it has been negligently pointed. We are well into an age blind to the nice but appreciable difference between, say, alcoholic burglars who drain 'all the gin bottles, which were under the bed' and the merely thirsty ones who drain 'all the gin bottles which were under the bed'. And for every necessary comma that is left out, an unnecessary apostrophe is sure to be put in: the apostrophe is daily being converted into the sign of a plural noun, interposed before the terminal *s*. A gleaming steel letter-box in the wall of *The Times* newspaper building, I am appalled to say, bears the legend LETTER'S – a solecism admittedly dwarfed by the far uglier solecism of the Seifert architecture all around it, but a shaking lapse all the same. Today the letterbox, tomorrow the leader page?

So *You Have a Point There* returns at a moment when we badly need its excellent advice. The culture, it would seem, has turned against punctuation. Perhaps *machismo* has something to do with it. The full stop alone flourishes because everyone can see that it is a manly point, brutal and decisive; anything less than a full stop is doubtful, better left to those who don't mind being thought pansies (or to poets; although many poets are so relieved to find short cuts to ambiguity that they leave out punctuation altogether). We have learnt to feel guilty about the sophistication represented by a colon or a semi-colon: anyone who has ever worked as a copywriter in advertising will recall the sneers that generally met his efforts to bring refinement, by way of clever punctuation, to his mendacious prose. The hard sell brooks no such grace-notes.

Eric Partridge lays down rules for punctuating with which there can be no argument. He stands for moderation, for an ideal to be found halfway between the fetishism of the old, emotionally backward kind of schoolteacher, who took a penal view of the matter and believed that rigorous punctuation was somehow a curb on adolescent vice; and the laxity of those moderns who scorn punctuation as a self-evident frill and refuse to be deterred en route to the end of the sentence by any such typographical chicanery (they deserve the fate of Sophocles, if Sophocles it was, who was said in some versions to have died when he ran out of breath reciting his own under-punctuated lines).

Partridge would have us punctuate carefully and with enjoyment, and there could be no more enjoyable way of starting than by reading his typically learned, realistic book. I have only one complaint against it: Mr Partridge has not told us where he found the many examples he gives of sound and unsound punctuation. Perhaps he made them up himself. This would have been a richer, even more instructive guide if he had also taken the chance of evaluating English writers by the rare – and far from pedantic – criterion of how sensitively they punctuated their work. It would be good to know which writers have advanced the art, and which have abused it.

This English

We thought it appropriate to start with a bit of self-laceration (from the front half, please note); but the £3 prize must go to Bruno Holbrook, for spotting Peter Watson's hysterical brawl with the apostrophe in the Sunday Times. **£2 each to our other monitors; paste entries on a postcard.**

☐ Over half the couples's colleagues approached them and advised them to stop seeing each other; 24 per cent of the male's workmates complained to his boss and 32 per cent of the woman's complained to hers'; sabotage of the couple's work . . . **Peter Watson,** *Sunday Times* (Bruno Holbrook)

☐ . . . with liberalism have now been made. And whence have James Comyn and Ronald Waterhouse been consigned? To the Family Division of the High Court . . . **John Paine,** NS (Charles Duce)

☐ He [Mr Lynch] knows that what seems now to be the most likely scenario in the North, a diminution in the violence followed by increasing British disinterest and no significant political advance, could also be disastrous in the long run for Ireland. **Mary Holland,** NS (C. 1. Semeonoff)

☐ It was a rather elderly, staid, condescending but solicitous aunt gathering her voluptuous skirts about her trim ankles unless she should inadvertently shock us. **Peter Knight,** *Daily Telegraph* (D. W. Stokoe)

Michael Mason

Off the Pug

Shaw's Champions by BENNY GREEN *Elm Tree Books* £5.95

It is easy to see why a publisher would have found this project attractive. The ingredients are so disparate, the mixture so piquant: jazz-critic Benny Green writing about George Bernard Shaw and heavyweight-boxing history in the sport's legend-laden years between 1890 and 1930. How striking if the first of the three ingredients could really bring the other two into a close and interesting connection! The dust-jacket promises just such a novel combination of materials, and the hinge is to be provided by Shaw's little-known novel, *Cashel Byron's Profession*, whose titular hero is a boxer:

> Shaw, having created Byron, tempted Corbett to impersonate him . . . Shaw later decided that boxer Georges Carpentier was Byron rendered in the flesh and reverted to the status of a boxing reporter to prove his point . . . he subsequently changed his mind and plumped for Tunney instead.

But the enthusiasm of the blurb-writer has run away with him; none of these claims about the book's contents corresponds to what Benny Green actually has to say.

The relevant history concerning Shaw and boxing is as follows. In 1882 Shaw wrote a novel about boxing called *Cashel Byron's Profession* which was eventually published in serial form in 1885. In 1892 'Gentleman Jim' Corbett took the heavyweight crown from Sullivan. In 1901 and again in 1906 Corbett appeared in the role of Cashel Byron in American dramatisations of Shaw's novel. In 1919 and 1921 Shaw wrote accounts in the press of, respectively, Carpentier's defeat of Beckett and Dempsey's defeat of Carpentier. In 1926 Tunney took the championship from Dempsey, and retained it in the rematch a year later. In between the two bouts Tunney declined to appear in a stage version of *Cashel Byron's Profession* and, after Shaw and Tunney became friends in 1928, they both vetoed a similar cinematic project.

Given these facts, there was, if anything, disappointingly little engagement between Shaw and championship boxing, apart from the friendship with Tunney after the latter had retired. Shaw had nothing to do with the American dramatisation of *Cashel Byron's Profession*, and called Corbett's version of the hero a 'travesty'. He admired Carpentier, but he did not bother to see any of his fights until employed by the *Nation* to do so (some of the phrasing in that review did resemble Shaw's earlier description of Cashel Byron – but no more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than the *Nation* itself may have planned, for the piece was headed 'The Great Fight, by the author of *Cashel Byron's Profession*'). Shaw's alleged prediction in 1924 that Tunney would defeat Dempsey is apocryphal – as Benny Green himself demonstrates – and so, *a fortiori*, is Tunney's alleged reply: that he had learnt the necessary skill from Cashel Byron. In fact Tunney thought Shaw's novel conveyed 'neither the temperament nor the psychology of the professional boxer'. In Tunney's account of his first fight with Dempsey, Benny Green hears echoes that are completely inaudible to me of the fight in 'the closing pages' of *Cashel Byron's Profession* (a strange error in description, this: Green uses the phrase on the penultimate page of his own book, but the fight in question occurs nowhere near the end of Shaw's novel).

All through the modern history of heavyweight boxing the contrast of 'gentlemanly' or intellectual fighters and ungentlemanly, brutish ones crops up with suspicious persistence. Nowadays new versions of it can be constructed out of the old materials; Mohammed Ali fights Marciano in computer-simulation. The polarity is one of the stereotypes of the sport, so the attempt to connect the gentlemanliness of Cashel Byron with that of, say, Corbett is likely to founder on the actual facts of the case. Shaw, anyway, was not a man to deal in stereotypes, and mind-versus-muscle, gentleman-versus-slugger, etc., was not the point of his characterisation of Cashel Byron, although Benny Green speaks as if it were.

True, Byron is a typically slippery Shaw invention – a figure, like so many in the plays, who looks as if he has been imagined in the clear, strong light of some provocative intellectual conviction, but who turns out to be unexpectedly ambivalent at close quarters, an instrument for attack on a confusing variety of fronts. Byron (a world-champion heavyweight of good background who secures the love of a landed, cultivated lady) is partly a contrivance to expose genteel disdain for pugilism. But Shaw also wanted to get in a dig at the Victorian idealisation of the 'noble' art. So Byron is a boor, no more gentlemanly or brainy in the ring than his defeated opponents despite his superior origins – he is simply a better boxer – and his wife comes to realise that he is more stupid and more dependent than even their children (and here Shaw again swings round, with a few sharp jabs at modish Mendelianism – having hitherto endorsed the cross-fertilisation of brain and brawn).

The anomalies in the endeavour to relate Shaw to heavyweight boxing history can be picked up simply in a reading of *Cashel Byron's Profession* and *Shaw's Champions* – for Benny Green is too truthful and too commendably devoted to Shaw to be able to write the striking but fictitious tale of 'life imitating art' that his publishers announce on the jacket. Occasionally he rouses himself and tries to wrench his intractable materials together with a desperate 'it is tempting to wonder whether . . .' or 'it seems almost unbelievable that . . .'. Yet most of the time he is happy to amble rather erratically through Shaw's life and times. Benny Green is probably equipped to write a good book about Shaw, but this is not it.

Derek Mahon

Close Encounters

A Singer at the Wedding by BRUCE ARNOLD *Hamish Hamilton* £4.95

A Woman of Property by MARGARET BLOUNT *Hutchinson* £4.95

Walter by DAVID COOK *Secker & Warburg* £4.25

The jacket of Bruce Arnold's first novel is based on a detail from Philip Wilson Steer's *Girls Running: Walberswick Pier.* Painted at the turn of the century, it shows two girls, perhaps sisters, running in step and hand-in-hand, their shadows longer than themselves, yachts on the horizon. The picture, which is both lyrical and, in retrospect, elegiac, is mentioned more than once in the novel itself. Walberswick, Suffolk, is described as 'not a very seasidy place . . . not full of day-trippers and amusement arcades'. Elsewhere there is much about smells and how they bring back memories, about a child 'before the first world war, in a suburban garden in Folkestone, recording in his nostrils what was to become the very odour of time itself'. There's something highly Proustian about all this; and indeed, *A Singer at the Wedding* describes the same deciduous arc as, for example, does *Swann's Way.*

The events of the novel take place in the late 1940s. The (nameless) narrator is a boy of 15 or so, a boarder at Coppinger, a small private school in the Cotswolds specialising in the sons of broken homes. The narrator's father, a retired naval officer, widowed and drink-prone, moves from bedsit to bedsit around the nicer parts of London. Through his father's involvement with Ursula, the Bohemian daughter of a comfortable middle-class home, the narrator experiences for the first time a sense of belonging. The climax of the story is an idyllic Christmas at Ursula's family home in a South Coast resort, after which the boy's erratic father destroys everything by marrying someone else. We finish up where we started, back at Coppinger. But the simple circularity of the events described shouldn't blind the reader to the book's remarkable artistry. If it has a fault, indeed, this lies in a too visibly conscious working of its material. It has heart, and yet is so perfectly wrought, so exactly contained within its emotional and imaginative parameters, that we are left with the sense of a beautifully executed period piece, a framed object entirely self-referring. There is mention of ration books and station buffets but in general the harsher and more mundane aspects of the world appear only in an aesthetically disinfected form. The narrator's eye is sharp but selective.

A sharp eye he certainly has for the oddities of human behaviour. With an outsider's privilege he observes how an old lady, 'of an age when the satisfaction of curiosity takes precedence over everything, completed at leisure her inspection of me, then turned away'; how a restaurant table is pulled out 'with that strange instinct among waiters for detecting prospective benevolence'; or how, at the height of a wedding reception,

> the mouths, moving in animated conversation, were responsible for the noise in my ear, but the two were separate. Individually the mouths were dumb, except when occasionally a shriek or bellow of laughter could, by chance, be connected with some gaping red orifice.

The two most important relationships in the story (narrator and father, narrator and first love) are very well done. The father is a memorable creation in his own right – weak, wayward, Micawberish, ashamed that he has nothing to give his son and unaware that he has more than he thinks. Furthermore, in his treatment of the first love theme (narrator and Ursula's niece), the author moves with extreme care and finds just the right tone:

> Does this sound pretentious, to invest an encounter between children . . . with the same time-suspending drama that accompanies . . . meetings between lovers? I do not know, but I remember how desperately important it was.

They go to the Regal to see *Brief Encounter* (what else?) and sit 'in the warm darkness of the cinema, side by side, our fingers intertwined, perpetually readjusting our hands to make sure that contact and response were maintained'. Ah yes, I remember it well.

The first thing you notice about *A Woman of Property* is the amount of space taken up with reported speech. People are always talking, gabbling even, so that the reader has no time to hear himself think. He is put in the position of Bruce Arnold's narrator, watching disembodied voices issuing from disconnected faces. Worse, the trivial chatter gives the author, winner of the *Guardian* Fiction Prize for *When Did You Last See Your Father,* no time to reflect. The intention, clearly, is to present the subtopian banality of her barely distinguishable characters with a minimum of authorial intervention. Well and good, but here we come up against a familiar problem: how do you render boringness without being boring? I'm afraid Margaret Blount offers no solution.

Another familiar problem, one that exercised Faulkner in *The Sound and the Fury,* is how to render mental backwardness without being mentally backward. David Cook has a brave try at it in *Walter,* the story of a retarded man orphaned and institutionalised for life. The author has devised an interesting kind of black humour to help him speak for his protagonist, one that is neither callous nor patronising; yet this is an evasion. No real effort is made to penetrate the darkness of Walter's mind, or to see the world as he might see it.

THE MABINOGION
BY LADY CHARLOTTE GUEST
A facsimile reproduction of the complete 1877 edition
528 pages: 50 engraved illustrations; quality cream cartridge paper; casebound in cloth; jacket.
Price £7.95 post free from the publishers or from good booksellers.
JOHN JONES CARDIFF LTD
41 Lochaber Street, Cardiff CF2 3LS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Spurling

Wild Man of the Woods

Gustave Courbet *Royal Academy*

Courbet was the St John the Baptist of 19th-century French painting. The statement is no sooner made than it has to be modified. First, there was at least one other Baptist on the scene at the time – Millet's *The Sower* was shown in the same Salon as Courbet's *Stonebreakers* and *Burial at Ornans* and caused an equal stir in the Paris art world; secondly, these Baptists prepared the way not for one Christ but many apostles; thirdly, Courbet saw himself rather as the man with the latchets than the one who was unworthy to unloose them. The famous painting, now at the Royal Academy, in which the world-storming *wunderkind* himself, knapsack on back, stick in hand and beard thrust out, is welcomed on the road near Montpellier by his devoted patron with servant, dog and coach in attendance, might easily be seen as a modern-dress version of the meeting on the road to Emmaus.

Nonetheless, St John was really his role, and this not only in the sense that he saw the light but could never quite bask in it as Manet and Monet were able to do after him; but also he remains to this day a somewhat antique, shaggy figure by comparison with the smooth operators he ushered in. Unlike Millet, who concentrated on monumental peasants in a flat landscape, Courbet poured his energy out on a bewildering range of subjects: seascapes, landscapes, portraits, self-portraits, still-lifes, animals and figures in landscape, nudes and large set-piece groups of figures with allegorical or at least enigmatic overtones. He called himself a realist and then had to fight his way out of the cliché. What he meant was that he claimed the right to interpret for himself, freshly and according to what past or present models he chose, any aspect of the life around him that caught his attention. In doing so he offended his contemporary public; but we, who have seen rather more done in the name of artistic licence than Courbet ever dreamed of, are likely to be offended by his old-fashionedness, his still partly uncouth links with the past.

For example, the matter of light. Courbet's deep forests and rock gorges – he lived under the Jura mountains – are slashed and dappled with light in a manner one had half-thought came in with Cézanne, but the figures in Courbet's landscapes appear to have been modelled in the studio and then superimposed. Hélène Toussaint's catalogue note praises *Huntsmen Training Hounds* for its iridescent shadows, a 'new mode of vision . . . which later fascinated the Impressionists', but the brilliance of the snowy landscape all round them leaves the two huntsmen untouched – their fronts are darker than the shadows they cast behind. In another snow scene, *The Poor Women of the Village*, the light falls from behind (though not so dramatically as it does in Millet's pictures), making the dark figures at least logical, if not yet – as they became when Manet played the outdoor light directly on his figures from in front – quite modern.

This suspension between old and new is even more disconcerting in the nudes and set-pieces, the two types of painting with which Courbet, always a rampant self-publicist, achieved his greatest successes in shocking the public. Again history has played a trick on him. We are dismayed by nudes, painted at more or less the same time as Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*, which look so like Rubens's or Titian's; Courbet's contemporaries were shocked to see Greek goddesses by Titian or Rubens metamorphosed into naked French ladies in modern French places. As for the great set-pieces – of which only *Peasants from Flagey* and the unfinished and probably retouched *Toilet of a Dead Woman* can be seen in London, since *Burial at Ornans*, *Departure of the Fire Brigade* and *The Studio* were judged too fragile to travel from Paris – they are most immediately striking for their awkwardness. In *Burial* and *Peasants from Flagey* the figures seem too large and too many for the space, overwhelming one with their closeness, while in *The Studio* and *Toilet of a Dead Woman* they are better spaced but now too far away, as if Courbet were having trouble with his bifocals. His public duly threw their brickbats and we, thinking of Renoir's *Umbrellas* or Manet's *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, know how it could have been done less clumsily. All the same, though those are authoritative, achieved compositions, these of Courbet's make their own unforgettable effect as struggles, palpably so even now, the rough, raw, disturbing artistic revolution itself.

They were intended to shock, however, and they contain also a large element of that play-acting, self-aggrandising person we can see in the early self-portraits, here tearing his hair and showing the whites above his pupils, there lying bleeding at the foot of a tree or posing as a left-handed cellist. Beside the roaring giant of artistic liberation – he who waves his hat to the Mediterranean as one untamed force to another in *The Seaside at Palavas* – stands a more questionable figure, ingratiating, facile, self-consciously meaningful, as in the paintings of shot animals and hooked trout or, worst of all, the ogling *Charity of a Beggar*, his last attempt at a Salon shocker.

But after *The Beggar* he painted the dazzlingly observed *Cliff at Etretat*, the still-lifes of fruit (done during his imprisonment over the affair of the Vendôme column) and the many versions of angry waves breaking on the Etretat beach (Cézanne described the example here as 'one of the marvels of the century'). So, still in two minds about him, one goes back through the exhibition trying to see behind the insistent image of Courbet the revolutionary, Courbet the hiking Christ, Courbet the would-be-greatest. Darkness, denseness, enclosure and a hint of threat are the real substance of his pictures. This is what *Peasants from Flagey* and *Burial at Ornans* have in common with the idyllic *Covert of Roe-Deer*, with the caves and forests, the profuse flower-arrangements and that treacherous-looking pair of *Young Ladies on the Banks of the Seine*. The one in the foreground is flopped on her front in semi-undress, looking at you from half-closed eyes, her outflung hands making beckoning but also claw-like gestures; the one behind, head in floppy hat propped on gloved hand, looks studiously away to the left. Heavy foliage roofs them closely; a boat is conveniently moored to the bank of the cool and placid river. Will you join them? Not on your nelly. This may be ostensibly real life, but its undertext is one of those fairy-tales with a bad ending for the hero, 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' perhaps. Nearby hangs a painting of Sleeping Beauty disguised as a thoroughly fleshly cow-girl nodding off at her spinning-wheel. Once caught, this feeling of old, unlucky folk-nightmares is hard to shake off; it is after all at least as true to the reality of peasant life as the politico-economic view of the thinking townsman. Courbet's successors saw things for the most part with metropolitan eyes – that too makes Courbet seem a survivor from another age, a goat-skin Baptist from the sticks but also a Peer Gynt who set out to dominate the modern world and secretly belonged to his native trolls.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Larfing Matters

Laughter *Royal Court*
Dingo *Warehouse*
The Way of the World *Aldwych*

Quite why Peter Barnes has christened his new play *Laughter* is hard to see, because it doesn't provoke it and isn't really about it. True, someone stumbles out front to tell the audience that a sense of humour is no remedy for evil, that jokes help tyrants because they soften hatred. True, his buttonhole squirts water and his trousers tumble down as he spouts this austere wisdom. But then the curtain is whisked up, and we're into quite another play or (rather) two plays. The first, in which Ivan the Terrible murders his importunate son, seems to be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about the arbitrary misuse of power. The second, set in the still centre of the respectable bureaucracy charged with organising Auschwitz, involves a much more impersonal and systematic style of brutishness. Plump both parables down in the world presently afflicting us, and we have Idi Amin on the one hand and the neutron bomb on the other, one at least of which subjects has made a few ribs ache in its time. But should we laugh at the quixotic monster who keeps the heads of his victims in his fridge, crisp as cabbages and no more likely to answer back when he feels like berating them? Can we laugh at the most blatant means Western civilisation has yet devised of demonstrating its preference for property over people? Perhaps; but, if so, why, how, how far, and with what effect on our moral health?

Mr Barnes occasionally offers the glint of an answer to these absorbing questions. In his epilogue, two Auschwitz prisoners lope onstage, a Flanagan and Allen in striped pyjamas, and swap glum wisecracks as the gas billows round them. 'According to the latest statistics one man dies in this camp every time I breathe.' 'Have you tried toothpaste?' 'No, the dental officer said my teeth were fine, only the gums have to come out.' That sort of exchange is, I suppose, a demonstration of dignity in extremis, two bony fingers wryly brandished at the Grim Reaper as he homes in. It's a way of coping with the inconceivable. And, rather earlier on, the civil servants drop their convoluted memos about canisters and showerheads and bring out their Christmas tipple. 'What do you call someone who sticks a finger up the Führer's arse?' the most starched and conventional of them suddenly, sottishly asks, and answers himself: 'A brain surgeon.' As the most rampant Nazi present indicates, by whipping out his hidden tape-recorder and threatening instant exposure, that's an example of the iconoclastic joke, calculated to subvert tyranny by mocking it. Its like may be heard on any street corner in Eastern Europe today; and if the play were more wholeheartedly concentrated upon its supposed subject, it might be tantamount to disproof of the first-minute claim, that humour is always reactionary. Alas, the jokes are too random, too unfunny, too intermittent and unrelated, to prove anything except that Barnes might do well to change his play's title from *Laughter* to *Lachrymation*.

So we're left with two perfectly serious studies of atrocity in which, at odd and unpredictable moments, the Tsar may seize the legs of a relative skewered on a spike and hilariously chant 'ring dem bells, ring dem bells', or one bureaucratic death's-head may answer another's moan that 'I find sex a pain in the arse' with a witty 'that means you're doing it the wrong way'. The first and weaker piece suffers from Barnes's old tendency to smother content with style, character and idea with elaborate archaisms culled from heaven knows where. Ivan's amiable pep-talk to the squirming princeling, 'your punishment's but a spike riven up through backarse cleavage where fartleberries cluster', is actually a mildish instance of the pastiche medievalism mainly on offer. The second play is far better, a cool if unoriginal satire on those who camouflage evil by reducing it to interdepartmental gobbledygook, planting it in pending files or dispatching it through 'proper channels', and never pausing to ask what 'it' actually is. Indeed, the only remotely honest character is also the nastiest, a baggy-trousered Hitlerite played by Timothy West, all scurvy red hair, scabrous red skin and a high suburban squawk equally capable of projecting petty triumph, poisonous contempt and gloating descriptions of genocide. Imagine some zealot National Fronter declaring UDI for Coulsdon, and you've just a little of Mr West's maniac ebullience. Imagine the tomb of Karl Marx run amok in Highgate cemetery and poleaxing the Sunday visitors, and you've his snorting, glowering, white-maned Ivan.

For Mr West the evening is an opportunity lavishly embraced, but for Mr Barnes one largely squandered. What, for instance, is the subliminal impact of the story of the old lady who passes the body of a Belfast man with a bullet-hole in his forehead, and piously remarks, 'thank God it missed his eye'? That comes from a play altogether more thorough and trenchant about humour, Trevor Griffiths's *Comedians*; but it's precisely the sort of bleak joke Barnes, too, should be analysing. Again, why and how could anyone laugh at the Scotsman who stood on a mine? On his way back to camp, holding his bloody penis, he meets his colonel, who says, 'I'll stop this self-abuse.' That's from Charles Wood's *Dingo*, which doesn't claim to be about laughter at all, yet treats battle, mutilation and death in a funhouse style that, wittingly or not, raises plenty of questions about the brutality of humour and the humour of brutality. A crazed soldier plays the ventriloquist with the charred corpse of a comrade. A PoW dressed as a chorus girl gets shot trying to escape. A clown struts up and down, balefully spoofing Monty and Churchill. Not much sign here of laughter helping tyrants by 'softening our hatred'. Mr Wood's aim is rather to use it to harden hatred; and, whether or not he wholly succeeds, at least he displays some interest in its moral possibilities, some recognition of its power to unsettle the settled and discombobulate the combobulated. And this in 1967, more than a decade before *Laughter*.

It's been a good week for the RSC. Its *Dingo* is more arresting than my memory of the original at the Royal Court, a sly and unyielding assault on the 'aftermyth of war', and its *Way of the World* is a persuasive riposte to Dr Johnson's charge that Congreve's people are simply 'intellectual gladiators', unrelievedly and emptily smart, and his wit a 'meteor playing to and fro with alternate coruscations'. John Barton, who directs, banishes gratuitous style and show, not to mention those alternately coruscating meteors, and offers instead a group of plausible worldlings in plausibly domestic surroundings trying simultaneously to hide and fulfil desires both pecuniary and sexual. Update the occasional 'thou' or 'sdeath', shift the odd bustle or breech, swap that chaise-longue for a Habitat sofa, and it might be London now, a guileful, wangling place where it's dangerous to display emotional vulnerability, and unsophisticated and embarrassing to advertise any but the most formal affection. I'll have more to say about it all hereafter.

Among this week's contributors:

PETER CONRAD's *Romantic Opera and Literary Form* will be published later this month by the University of California Press.

JOHN STURROCK is Deputy Editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*.

CLIVE JAMES's second collection of essays *At the Pillars of Hercules* will be published by Faber towards the end of the year.

JOHN SPURLING is currently working on a play commissioned by the Greenwich Theatre.

Films

John Coleman

Come Outside

The Duellists (A) *Plaza 3; ABC, Fulham Road*
Drôle de Drame (A) *Academy One*
Cathy's Curse (X) and **Draws** (X) *Classic 5 Moulin; Classic, Victoria*

Somewhere in the back of many cowards' heads, and I hereby register myself as fully-paid-up in the chicken union, lurks the fear of an actual, physical confrontation. Fists, feet, knives, bottles may fly and one could even win. This, to chaps of my ilk, is no comfort. The whole business of maiming gives me the curdles. I am very much on Falstaff's side when he roundly announced, 'Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? no. What is honour? a word.' Joseph Conrad spent a considerable amount of creative energy on refurbishing that word. A short story of his, 'The Duel' or 'The Point of Honour' (it goes under two titles), is centrally concerned with one man calling another out, absolutely refusing to let him off the end of his épée. The period is that of the Napoleonic Wars and Ridley Scott's first, astonishing film, *The Duellists*, takes one from 1800 to 15 or so years later. Gerald Vaughan-Hughes's screenplay is very strange, beautifully precise and wayward by turns. The tale is of an obsessive persecution, a sort of nightmarish class-clash that never lets up, between a blacksmith's son and officer, Feraud (Harvey Keitel), and an aristo officer, d'Hubert (Keith Carradine). As they rise in rank, they clash repeatedly. Duel they do, and it has to be said that the tyro director Mr Scott brings off these set, slashing and parrying pieces superbly. The title is finally the name of the game.

To sustain an occasion built around swordsmanship clearly needs genius, as well as stamina and William Hobbs as fight director. That the result, which left me admiring and utterly unmoved, compels attention – and it does – has to be thanks to a formidable cast (Albert Finney, Robert Stephens, Edward Fox, Tom Conti, and some marvellous ladies, Cristina Raines, Diana Quick, Jenny Runacre figure, the *mot juste*) and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some fantastic eye to a scene. This is *Barry Lyndon* without the painterly switches – everything from Hogarth to Gainsborough to Constable, and back again – which made that static Kubrick such a studied visual quiz. You do not feel the necessity to score points for recognition of sources here. But it is startlingly, terribly composed. Frank Tidy's photography is allowed to be consistent and is smashing. The many, many close-ups show good faces reacting intelligently and there are steely Russian snowscapes, misty sapling forests that positively incited applause. Wherein, unless one is the sort of aesthete I ain't, lies the damnable chill. There are also sound-and-motion excursions (a blade scrapingly being withdrawn from its scabbard, the fresh whish of a sword in action, even a sneeze) that arrive as if Mr Scott had minted them, which – in a real sense – he has.

Meanwhile, the basic richness and complexity of the Conrad original go by the bored. Keitel and Carradine, the odd couple trapped in a recurrence of hostilities, are – after all and however fine – American: they simply, to these old ears, sound too much alike. And the crux ought surely to be their difference: it is from that the sustained quarrel should spring. It ought to have been a genuinely horrifying film, tapping our private worries about that desperate but serious word 'honour', a provocation to re-define it. Instead, it is an elegant promise.

Marcel Carné, Jacques Prévert: an extraordinary team – the director believing in a deeply French and rather sloppy way of life entailing death just around the corner, the writer all for gaiety, surrealism, nonsense. I was in Paris when Prévert's *Paroles* came out, a thickish book of marvellously flip verse. It sold like hot *croissants*. It should have: broke as I was, *I* bought a copy. *Drôle de Drame*, made in 1937, is droll in its own way, which is to say it works but only just. It is thoroughly nutty, drawn at what could only be called a considerable remove from an English detective story by one Storer Clouston, entitled 'The Lunatic at Large, or His First Offence'. For all one knows, it was his last. What the Carné-Prévert combine made of this – and to attempt to retail the plot would be a kind of madness I am still not quite ready for – was just wild fun. To offer an inkling, there is Louis Jouvet as a bland and naughty Bishop of Beckford, going under the name of Soper (no comment) and first found delivering a lecture to a hallful of ladies and a man with a bike (Jean-Louis Barrault) on the iniquities of evil crime literature. His cousin (Michel Simon) is amiably among the skimpy audience. Turns out he has two names and, under one of these, writes exactly the dastardly thrillers the bishop is castigating. Barrault becomes impassioned, announces himself as a killer, the 'butcher of butchers', and (what more naturally?) rides his bike rapidly out of the hall. From this quiet start, things warm up. I suppose it is a crucial example of camp cinema. One imagines many people not liking it. I did like it, given a cast that further includes Françoise Rosay and a dewy-eyed Jean-Pierre Aumont. To see ourselves as others see us, or saw us, you should take in this ostensibly London-based fantasy.

A comprehensively unpleasant double-bill has apparently been kicking around the provinces for some time. Metropolitans may now catch it, if unlucky or prone to punishment. *Cathy's Curse* (*Cauchemars* was its justified French title) deals in the child-possessed bit currently fashionable, and we'll skip the obvious joke for once. What actually happens in this Franco-Canadian venture, directed by Eddy Matalon (and he is hereby credited out of sheer spite), somehow escaped me, although I spent at least 60 of its 80 minutes looking at the screen. There is this girleen and she has a doll and there has been a car crash before the movie improper begins. The kid is evidently churned up by something and her doll likewise. Between the two of them, they wreak damage, like killing people and twitching and displaying a nastily scarred face. It is the sort of movie that has a distraught mother who totally deserves to be and a dad who is too busy to notice what is going on. He had my sympathy. I am inventing this, but the Frinton-on-Sea Dramatic Society would surely have acted it better. *Draws* is a pathetic collection of would-be take-offs of this and that. There is a fat whore who is presumed to be out of Fellini and looked promising but she disappeared at the approximate moment the action might have started. It's all like that, the absolute *Laugh-Out*, what Mrs Thurber once accused Mr Thurber of: strictly fourth-form stuff and rubbish. An audience is seen leaving the event – on-screen – at the end and there is some business of T-shirts. I got a couple, which I have yet to examine. This is mentioned to establish how unbribable some of us are at the NS. But one does wish Oppidan Entertainments – in their kinky way, a brave outfit – better luck next time. They are on the right track: here they had rotten runners.

Television

Russell Davies

How Do I Hate Thee?

Reporter Tom Mangold has given us many a cocoa-curdling programme, but *Terror International* (BBC-1) would have curdled a stiff whisky. It arrived in two parts, straddling the *News*. The first segment sought to establish the practical connections between extant groups of international 'terrorists' – a term already implicit in the programme's title, although one of the brethren was allowed to make the ritual point that 'freedom fighters' is preferred on his side of the argument. The four groups identified were the PFLP, the Japanese Red Army, the German Red Army Fraction (I had thought they were a Faction), and the 'Carlos Network'. Mangold and his team got closer to Carlos than might have been expected, though they had to go to Bogota to do it. There, on a sunny terrace, sat Carlos's former right-hand woman, remembering the happy times off the Fulham Road when Carlos, privately shedding his carefully maintained playboy image, would mull over his latest plans. 'He took the pistol with such a tenderness . . .' the lady gushed discreetly, and one wondered, not for the last time in a harrowing evening, what it is like to hate so hard that you fall in love with violence, and the means of violence, and your own capacity for violence.

For a brief moment, while the shiny-sleek Sheikh Yamani was on, smirkily recalling his escape from Carlos after the 1975 kidnapping, it was possible to imagine the terrorists' fury. Here was an embodiment of provocative complacency. 'Am I more revolutionary now?' he returned Mangold's question wonderingly. 'I thought I'm an imperialist!' He was happy to be such. You may dislike me and everything I lounge for, ran his unspoken excuse, but being me is better than being a terrorist, isn't it?

There was no time, unfortunately, to give this question the serious attention it perhaps deserves; for Mangold's film began at this point to generate anger. Going into the horrific details of the recent Dubai hijack, he treated us to the distressing testimony of Gaby Dillmann, an astonishingly sane and articulate stewardess. She had experienced all the hideous physical degradations of that event, culminating in the shooting of the pilot after a 'revolutionary trial' that had consisted chiefly in blows delivered to the face of his victim by 'Captain Martyr Mahmoud'. We cut to an interview Mangold had recorded with a Dutch activist, Ciska Eesken. 'What's murder?' she challenged him, in the familiar stone-faced, know-nothing style. 'Murder is a dead German pilot in Mogadishu,' replied the reporter, matching her implacability. All she managed in reply was a facial expression – half shrug, half squirm – on which the first part of the programme closed in an atmosphere of angry bafflement.

We got very little further than this in the quest for an articulate justifying theory behind the outrages. The second half provided not interpretation but further research; Mangold and his producer John Penycate had gone too far in their detective work to turn back. There was plenty of useful material here – it was instructive, for example, to be introduced to those parts of the Middle East (Iraq, mainly) where Yasser Arafat is held to be unacceptably moderate – but in general one felt that Mangold was asking questions whose answers, if he found them, would at once evaporate into meaninglessness. He was much concerned to discover whether the cheerful Dr George Habash, speaking for the official PFLP in Beirut, had really parted company with his old friend Dr Wadi Haddad (they had set up a clinic together – I wonder if they had any bomb victims to patch up?), or was merely covering for the man who was masterminding the international bomb and ransom network. But even if Mangold had somehow succeeded in proving that the link between these men remained, he would not thereby have done the most useful thing in the circumstances. An underground leader discovered is a leader replaced; his functions pass to some still-anonymous col-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

league. This is to carp ungratefully at Mangold, I know, who is evidently as courageous as he is thorough. (His interview with a young Arab trainee was enough to underline the point. 'Can I ask that?' he would ask another figure lurking offscreen. 'No? All right – I won't ask that then.' Considering that half the answer to his question had already slipped out of the youth, he had a right to sound rattled.) But what we really needed to consider was not who, but why. In particular, it was vital to tease out the meaning of 'extreme left-wing' in this context. Is there something inherent in marxist theory that is bound to issue in orgies of self-righteousness? Is not 'The Revolution' perhaps self-righteousness systematised ?

There was another programme that might have helped here, but the second in the series *Men of Ideas* (BBC-2) was limply uninvolving, a disappointment after the first week's lively disquisition on the nature of philosophy by Sir Isaiah Berlin. Professor Charles Taylor, this week's expert, was a Canadian professor from Oxford, and more concerned to defend his speciality, I thought, than to examine it in the critical spirit the programme encourages. The vicarish Bryan Magee (who had decided to call Taylor 'Chuck' in an odd, self-conscious tone, signalling that they were old friends although they didn't agree about much) did his best to make the Professor admit that marxism, when applied, had had certain effects on societies; that these effects were frequently as undesirable as the ones they had replaced; and above all that the nature of these effects was not unconnected with the way the retrospective explanatory function of marxism conferred a dangerous aura of messianic inevitability (hence the self-righteousness) on its adherents and all their doings. The Professor tended to counter with instances of the attractiveness of the theory, which is not in question. It ain't what you think, it's the way that you think it.

Weekend Competition

No 2500 **Set by Spiro Keats**

In the long and unrelievedly glorious history of the weekend comp, few tasks we have set you have proved more agreeable than the composition of clerihews. The first such comp we set produced no fewer than 500 entries. So, if you can take time out from the various nationwide celebrations (ox roasts, street parties, floral dances) which are currently disrupting the land, write us, please, a cool clerihew about any contemporary figure. By February 17.

No 2497 **Set by Spiro Keats**

We asked you to rewrite any soliloquy from *Hamlet* in the style of Philip Larkin.

Report **by Spiro Keats**

A tougher test than some of you realised, to transfer gloom from Elsinore to Hull. A great many of you, apparently, thought that a little slick coprolalia embellished with a reference to toads would do the trick. We were *quite* pleased with the winners, anyway; you have at least checked the chariot of our ire. Seven pounds each.

Leavings

It would be nice to simply melt away,
For, after all, you can't do yourself in;
The world's a load of crap, like some backyard
Full of fag-ends and ragwort. Father's dead;
Two months, or less, and he was twice the man
My uncle is – Satchmo to Harry James –
And he looked after mum (this memory hurts!)
And she hung around him as if the sun
Shone out of his backside: and yet so soon,
Before those new, slightly outmoded, shoes
She wore that morning to the cemetery
Showed signs of wear, she shacked up with
my uncle,
While those obscene mascara runs still showed;
Too quick after her oats; too close to home.
It can't be right; but my affronted heart
I'll hide beneath my waistcoat. Mum's
the word.

GERARD BENSON

Sad Steps

God I'm a turd. Noshing and boozing, is it?
There must be other things. I've gone off sex.
Do any thinking? No thanks. But it's what
we're for
Sometimes, or who'd pull his finger out?
Yet it says here these pissed-off desperate Dans
Have signed on for some footnote of a war
As if it were the Social Security
In a place the travel agents don't even
quote for.
Am I missing on machismo, personality-
damaged,
Or just boxing clever? Mind, the
incentive's there,
I'm fairly sure my uncle killed my father,
He's got machismo, or my mother thinks so.
I'd better knock the hard stuff off for starters,
A sauna, a few press-ups, a cold shower,
Get back in training, *then* dial 999.

K.W.G.

Worse than Society

Why should I hesitate? Why not just take
That one enormous overdose and lie
Down on the fusty bed and never wake?
To live's a damn sight harder than to die.

Then why not jack it in? Get clear away
From the toad work and all the other ills
Like Warlock-Williams, VAT and tooth
decay,
Lefties and hearties and electric bills!

Easy way out? Perhaps; but then
what dreams
May wait beyond that blue immensity:
One might confront, unlikely as it seems,
Horrors more stark in their intensity

Than even Warlock-Williams. So I'll stay,
Perform my footling chores and write
my verse
And tolerate the tedium and pay
My dues for fear of finding something worse.

ROBERT BAIRD

High Wonders

When I see some kid from Norway
Getting ready for a scrap
And not giving a sod for consequences,
I know I'm full of crap.

What's the point of being alive
If all a man's got to do
Is sleep a third of his life away
And stuff himself and screw?

The thing is, we make excuses
For dropping out when the going's hard;
We tell ourselves we're being sensible
But really we're shit-scared.

Here's me, with Dad done in
And Mum behaving like a brass,
And what do I do about it? Fuck-all.
It's time I got off my arse.

NAOMI MARKS

Tony Miles

Chess

No 69 **British Ladies Championship**

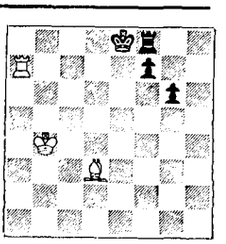
Concurrently with the closing rounds of the Hastings premier tournament was staged the play-off match for the British Ladies Championship between Jana Hartston and Sheila Jackson. After some debate – the sponsors wanted only two games, which is ridiculously short for such a match – it was finally decided that four games should be played. It was a long hard match, three of the games went to seven hours, and Jana Hartston emerged victorious by a $3\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$ score. This was rather a harsh result for Sheila who played well throughout only to be consistently outplayed in the inevitable time scrambles. I found the first game the most interesting and it clearly had a great effect on the result of the match.

White: S. Jackson **Black: J. Hartson**

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, P-K3; 3. P-Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, P-QR3; 5. N-QB3, Q-B2; 6. B-K2, N-KB3; 7. 0-0, N-B3; 8. B-K3, B-K2; 9. P-B4, P-Q3; 10. K-R1, B-Q2; 11. Q-K1, 0-0; 12. Q-N3, K-R1; 13. P-QR4, N-QN5. An unusual idea. By overprotecting Q4 black prepares for . . .P-K4. So **14. P-K5, KN-Q4; 15. N x N, N x N; 16. B-N1.** Or 16. B-Q2, Q-B4; 17. P-B3, P-QN4. **16. . . .QR-B1; 17. P-B3, P x P; 18. P x P, P-B4; 19. B-Q3. Q-Q1; 20. Q-B3, B-N4; 21. P-KN3?** Not 21. N x BP? P-KN3 or 21. P-B4, N-N5; but the text is also bad as it weakens the long white diagonal. Both players were already seriously short of time, as is obvious from the subsequent play. **21. . . . B-R3; 22. QR-K1, Q-B2.** Intending . . .N-K2-B3. **23. P-R4, N-K2; 24. P-R5?! P-KN3?!** 24. . . .N-B3! is slightly better for black. Now comes an amazing time scramble where the point goes back and forth. **25. B-K3, P-KN4; 26. P-KN4! N-B3; 27. P x P, P x P?!** Dubious but 27. . . .N x P; 28. Q-Q1, N x B; 29. Q x N, P x P; 30. N x P is also most unpleasant. **28. B x BP?** 28. N x P should win. **28. . . .N x N; 29. B x N, B-B3.** Not 29. . . .B x B; 30. P-K6ch and P-K7. **30. R-K4, B-N2?** 30. . . . R x B! 31. Q x R, R-B1 wins for black. **31. Q-N4?** Here 31. P-R6! wins for white e.g. 31. . . .B x KRP; 32. P-K6ch, B-N2; 33. P-K7, R-B2 (or . . .KR-K1; 34. Q-R5!) 34. B x R! and black cannot defend the back rank. **31. . . . B x Rch; 32. Q x B, Q-B2! 33. B-R3, Q x P; 34. K-N1, R x Rch? 35. B x R, R-B1; 36. P-K6, Q-R3; 37. P-K7, R-K1; 38. Q x P, B x Bch; 39. P x B, Q-N2.** At this point the controller intervened and told the players to reconstruct the game and complete the scoresheets. On doing so they discovered that only 39 moves had been made (the time control is at 40) and meanwhile white's flag had fallen! White was duly given more time and the game restarted. Black is clearly winning now.
40. P-Q5, Q-Q5ch; 41. K-R1, Q-K5ch; 42. K-N1, Q-K6ch; 43. K-R1, R x P; 44. Q-B8ch, R-K1. 45. Q-B3ch, Q x Q; 46. P x Q, R-K8; 47. K-N2, R-B8; 48. B x P, R x P; 49. B-N7, R-QR6; 50. B-B6, K-N2; 51. P-Q6, K-B3; 52. B-K8, R-K3; 53. P-Q7, K-K2; 54. K-B2, K-Q1; 55. K-N2, R x P; 56. K-N3, R-Q5 Resigns.

Problem 69

White to play. Can he win? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 15 February.



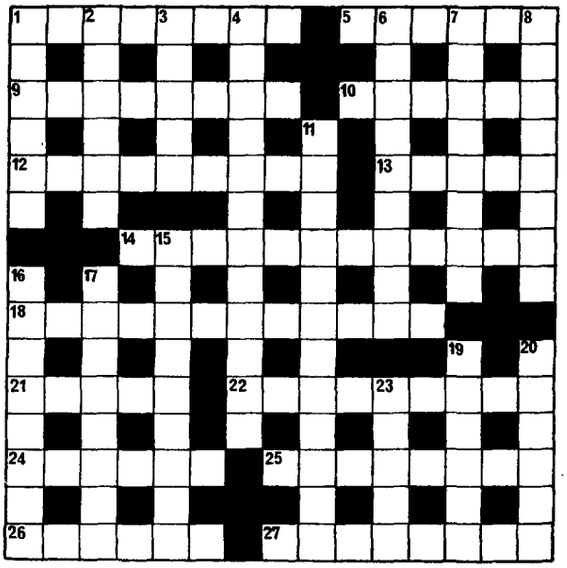
Solution to Problem 67

1. B-Q5! wins outright. There is no defence to the twin threats of 2. Q x B mate and 2. Q-R5ch (1. . . .Q x R; 2. Q-R5ch, B-R3; 3. Q x Bch, Q-R2; 4. Q x Rch, Q-N1; 5. Q x Q mate).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Weekend Crossword 1251

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1251, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 14 February.



ACROSS

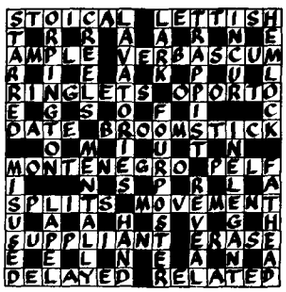
1. Disfigurement caused when there are a large number beside the river in an open space (8).
5. Did some Geography although crazy about another subject? (6).
9. One patch converted for use as a memorial (8).
10. Become tiresome as a goddess (6).
12. Extremely enthusiastic if at a clan gathering (9).
13. Snake beheads a companion of snakes (5).
14. Give the Irishman unfinished brown soup (12).
18. Olga, Masha and Irena, for example (5, 7).
21. Little fish comes in if you feel very lonely (5).
22. Change of tune before the meeting, although not in a partisan manner (9).
24. Spoil the secluded and fen-like (6).
25. Abandon one's rule and cite a bad translation (8).
26. Is frightened of turning sadder (6).
27. Lock outside relatives for misdemeanour (8).

DOWN

1. Calm down if held by the swift (6).
2. Laws soon needed in the civil service (6).
3. French word and music (5).
4. They are rogues, but the cry is about no rise after strikes (12).
6. Material for one who survives without a degree (9).
7. The place of Dawson's man (8).
8. 'He fits for fate, and first —— their mind' (Dryden) (8).
11. Something on your air ticket which paralyses movement through the air? (6, 6).
15. New tune heard, having just been brought to light (9).
16. The rest made to order poured forth in abundance (8).
17. Cross when the Rest collapse and are about to declare (8).
19. Cloth used for the backing to make a cap last (6).
20. Schools which give the learner agreement about this in France (6).
23. Birds for bars (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1250



Prizewinners to No 1250

Luke Ridge (Hythe)

J. J. Breen (London NW3)

Tom Findlay (W. Germany)

APPOINTMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Political & Economics Studies Group

Applications are invited for three posts in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. The posts are for two years from September 1978, or earlier if possible.

LECTURER IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (Ref 250/42)

with special interest in devolution, regional and local government. The successful applicant will be expected to participate in courses on comparative government and political theory.

LECTURERS IN ECONOMICS (Ref 251/42)

The successful applicants will be expected to conduct courses in economic theory plus any one or more of economic policy, public sector economics, labour and social economics, international economics.

The lecturers will contribute principally to undergraduate courses in Behavioural Science and Combined Honours, but will be expected to participate in research supervision and other courses as required.

Commencing salary will be within the range £3,333 to £5,015 p.a. on a scale rising by annual increments to £6,655 p.a. (currently under review).

Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Staff Officer (quoting the appropriate reference number), University of Aston in Birmingham, Gosta Green, Birmingham B4 7ET (Tel. 021-359 3611 Ext 201) to whom applications should be returned not later than 3 March 1978.

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN

HOUSEFATHER & HOUSEMOTHER

Required to join team of 15 for this school of 35 autistic children. Some experience/qualification in child-care work desirable but not essential. (Single accommodation only). Apply in writing to: The Principal, DEDISHAM SCHOOL, SLINFOLD, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX, RH13 7RA.

BBC

requires

CHINESE PROGRAMME ORGANISER

The post is based in London and duties include the planning, production and editorial control of BBC programme output in Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) and the direction and supervision of the work of the Chinese broadcasting staff.

The work calls for sound political and editorial judgment, detailed and up-to-date knowledge of political, economic, social and cultural affairs in China and the Far East, and the ability and experience necessary to devise and edit programmes for a Chinese speaking audience in a lively manner. A first hand knowledge of China, relevant experience in broadcasting or journalism and a fluent knowledge of Chinese are desirable.

Salary: £7,090 p.a. (may be higher if qualifications exceptional) × £290 to max. £8,830 p.a.

Telephone or write immediately, enclosing addressed envelope, for application form quoting reference 78.G.1058-NS to Appointments Department, BBC, London W1A 1AA. Tel: 01-580 4468 ext. 4619.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE

SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER NATIONAL/ INTERNATIONAL

To work nationally and internationally with particular responsibility for environmental policies but with further involvement in other aspects of the Council's operations. The person appointed would have proven administrative skills, knowledge of environmental issues and an ability and willingness to take on other responsibilities.

Salary £4,003-£5,020 (under review) + £133 p.a. London Weighting. 4 weeks annual leave; superannuation scheme. Further details and application form from the Administrator, NCSS, 26 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HU. 01-636 4066.
Closing date 17 February.

OXFORD AND SWINDON CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD

Applications are invited for the position of

Member Relations Officer

The Society, which operates in Oxfordshire and a large area of North Wilts has a turnover of £38 million and 140,000 members.

The Officer will be a member of the Society's management team and will be responsible for the work of the Member Education Council — which includes the organisation and development of Co-operative adult and youth groups and all types of member participation activities of the Society.

Conditions of employment will be in accordance with the National Association of Co-operative Officials.

Applications giving details of age, experience and other relevant information must be received not later than 28 February by

The Secretary,
Member Education Council,
Oxford and Swindon Co-operative Society Ltd.,
Co-operative Hall, East Street,
Swindon, Wilts.

Negotiations Officer

Applications are invited for the post of Negotiations Officer. Experience in Civil Service or public sector trade union activity and of the Civil Service Whitley Council machinery desirable. Ability to communicate effectively is essential.

The salary scale is: £3,900, £4,040, £4,200, £4,360, £4,520, £4,700 to which should be added Inner London Weighting of £465 p.a. Annual leave entitlement is thirty days and there is a non-contributory pension scheme. Retirement is compulsory at age 60.

Applications are invited for this appointment which should include particulars of age, educational qualifications, present and previous employment and trade union experience. These must be received not later than Wednesday, 22 February 1978, addressed to the **General Secretary, Society of Civil & Public Servants, 124/130 Southwark Street, London SE1 0TU**, from whom application forms are available.

VACANCIES

We require

MALE and FEMALE AGENTS

FULL and PART-TIME

If you are interested and would like to make up to £100 p.w. send for free details, enclosing s.a.e., to:

CALIBRE JEWELLERY SUPPLIES,
Calibre House, 162a Sefton Street,
SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Industrial Society

One of Britain's leading advisory and training bodies in man management and industrial relations

The Industrial Society is an independent body concerned with promoting the fullest involvement of people in their work. The Society is governed by a council which consists of leading figures from the employment world, including national and senior trade union officials.

Applications are invited for the position of

TRADE UNION ADVISER

In salary scale £4,659 — £5,508

The Trade Union Development Union is concerned with maintaining the Society links with officials and representatives within trade unions and for providing advice which will enable both officials and representatives to perform their duties effectively.

The Unit consists exclusively of active trade unionists who, before joining the Society, held office within the movement as a full-time official or employee representative.

Applications are invited from men and women with at least five years' experience in a position of responsibility within a trade union at shop floor or full-time official level.

Applications giving details of previous experience, quoting reference A237, to Donald Fazakerley, The Secretary, The Industrial Society, PO Box IBQ, 48 Bryanston Square, London, W1H 1BQ.

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Applications are invited for the following, tenable from August, 1978.

Faculty of Arts

1. Lecturers in Fine Arts—To teach either General and Advanced Western Painting, including a course in Watercolour or General and Advanced Chinese Painting. Applicants should be accomplished artists in Western or Chinese painting, with a distinctive creative style.
2. Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in World History—To teach courses in Western History, with emphasis on Ancient Western History and Medieval Western History.
2. Lecturer in Western Music—To teach courses in the theory and history (especially Medieval and Renaissance) of music. Practising musician preferred.
4. Lecturer in Philosophy—To teach courses in the general area of history of Western Philosophy of Contemporary Philosophy with specialisation in Aesthetics. Preference will be given to those who can teach or do research in Chinese.
5. Lecturer in German Studies—To teach courses in German; experience in teaching and research in the field of German as a foreign language preferred.
6. Lecturer in French—To teach courses in French Language and Literature. Preference will be given to those with adequate experience in teaching 'French as a foreign language'.

Faculty of Business Administration

7. Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in Accounting and Finance—To teach courses in Accounting and Finance.
8. Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in General Business Management and Personnel Management.—Applicants should be able to teach at least three of the following courses: Business Communications, Business Policy, Organisation Theory, Industrial Psychology, Industrial Relations, Labour Law, Industrial Health & Safety, Personnel Training & Development, and Wage & Salary Administration and should be able to communicate in both Chinese and English.
9. Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in Marketing and International Business—To teach courses in Marketing Management or Quantitative Methods for Marketing and Marketing Research.

Faculty of Science

10. Lecturer in Computer Science—Applicants should possess a broad background knowledge of computer hardware and software design, computer organisation, programming language, compiler design, systems programming and operating systems; preferably with practical experience of Microprocessing.
11. Lecturer in Physics—To teach courses in Physics at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Candidates should have experimental research experience in applied physics, biophysics, polymer physics, optical physics or other related fields.

Faculty of Social Science

12. Lecturers in Economics—To teach either Chinese Economy, Comparative Economic Systems and Economic Development or Econometrics, Statistics, Mathematical Economics and International Economics.
13. Senior Lecturers/Lecturers in Journalism and Communication—To teach courses in Journalism and Communication. Applicants should preferably have media experience and a strong interest in any two of the following areas of Studies: Communication Theory and Research Methods, Advanced Reporting and Editing, Communication of China, Intercultural and International Communication, Radio/TV Production and Media Management. Knowledge of Chinese will be an advantage.
14. Lecturer in Social Work—To teach Social Welfare Administration, Social Research and/or Social Work Methods.
15. Senior Lecturers/Lecturer in Government and Public Administration—To teach courses and to develop research in any two of the following areas: (a) Administrative Theories, (b) Public Policies, (c) Development Administration, (d) Political Theories, (e) Comparative Government and Politics and (f) International Relations.
16. Senior Lecturer in Psychology—To teach courses in Psychology and responsible for the planning and development of a Psychology Programme. Fluent Chinese is desirable.

General Requirement for Teaching Posts

1. Candidates for Senior Lectureships should have a Ph.D. in a relevant field, considerable university teaching and research experience and academic publications of originality and merit.
2. Candidates for Lectureships should have a higher degree (preferably a Ph.D) in a relevant field, with appropriate university teaching and/or research experience.

Annual Salary

Senior Lecturer: £10,710-£14,437 by eight increments. Lecturer: £6,900-£7,830 by two increments BAR £8,295-£11,565 by seven increments. (The above salary scales are based on exchange rate HK$8.00=£1.00 and this rate is subject to change.) The grade to which appointment is made and starting salary will depend on qualifications and experience.

Application Procedure

General information concerning terms of service and application forms are obtainable from the Personnel Section, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong. Application together with one set of the applicant's publication and copies of recent testimonials should reach the University as soon as possible. Please mark 'APPLICATION' on the envelope.

COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

The National Volunteer Agency

Volunteer Director

CSV has established a programme with five local authorities, designed to involve children in care in service to the community. Funded by the DHSS, it has already, in its first year, fruitfully involved over 120 young people in care in community service projects, as an alternative to residential care.

A field based Volunteer Director is now needed to work in the London Borough of Wandsworth on such a scheme. The worker will be expected to involve approximately 30 children in care, in the age range 15-18, in full time community service projects each year.

Candidates need some experience of work with difficult adolescents, excellent administrative ability, tact, energy and enthusiasm.

The post reports to Andrea Kelmanson, Co-ordinator of Special Projects.

Salary on the AP3 scale £3,396 - £3,774 plus £459 London weighting.

Further details and application forms from: **Lonnie Ring, CSV, 237 Pentonville Road, London N1 9NJ. Tel: 01-278 6601.**

GOVERNMENT OF MALTA

Posts of

Director of The Department of Medicine
Director of The Department of Surgery
Director of The Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Applications (10 copies), naming 3 referees, from suitably qualified candidates are invited for the above mentioned posts. The application should be received by the **Chief Government Medical Officer, Merchants St, Valetta, Malta,** from whom further particulars are obtainable, before 28 February 1978.

The appointee may also be chosen as Professor with the duties of Head or Deputy Head of the respective Department of the Medical School.

Salary, allowances and conditions of work will be discussed with individual applicants.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
HERTFORD COLLEGE

TUTORIAL FELLOWSHIP AND LECTURESHIP IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

The College proposes to elect an Official Fellow and Tutor in English Literature. A part-time University Lectureship is associated with the Fellowship and the successful candidate will be eligible for appointment to the post by the Board of the Faculty.

Applications, giving particulars of qualifications and experience and the names of three referees, should be sent to the Principal by 18 February, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

LECTURESHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS

Applications are invited from graduates for a Lectureship in international politics. It would be an advantage if the successful candidate were also able to help with the teaching of government courses offered by the Department.

Salary according to qualifications and experience on the scale £3,333 to £6,655 (under review) with superannuation benefits.

Further particulars from the Registrar, University of Leicester, to whom applications on the form provided should be sent by 28 February, quoting reference LPNS.

ADDRESS LIST COMPILER/SORTER, work at home, London area. Requires no typing, but intelligence, great patience and obsessive accuracy, could suit bed-ridden, house-bound, or deaf person, pay by arrangement, call 01-251 0012, ask for promotion department, or write to Box 315 giving details of experience etc.

CONTENTED TEMPS are at Stella Fisher: earn top London pay rates in congenial office work, with accessible journey through Stella Fisher Bureau, 110 Strand, WC2. 836 6644 (also open Sats 10-12.30 p.m.).

TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnston Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp. Fenwick's). 493 3005.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COHSE

Britain's Health Service Union

Research Assistant

£3,582 - £3,825
+ £354 London Weighting

This is a new appointment in the Union's Research Dept, at Head Office in Banstead, Surrey. Duties include preparing briefing papers, writing reports, abstracting articles and background policy and information work. Knowledge of Labour movement and the NHS is desirable as is background in economics. **Write with full details to the Research Officer, COHSE, Glen House, High Street, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2LH, not later than Friday 10 February.**

RESEARCH CLERK with shorthand/typing is required to join a small but developing Research/Information Department at a Trade Union's Head Office in Banstead, Surrey. Enjoyable, interesting work in pleasant offices just outside London on the 164 and 164A bus routes. Duties include filing, dictation, typing, mail, cutting newspapers, maintaining library catalogues and registers, book ordering and telephone work. Good speeds and ability to take responsibility essential.

3 weeks 3 days annual leave, 5 day week, pension scheme. Write with full details including two references to the Research Officer, Confederation of Health Service Employees, Glen House, High Street, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 2LH. Please mark envelope 'Research Clerk'.

RETURNED VOLUNTEER ACTION needs Administrator within democratic team framework. Work will involve development education, information and campaigning, co-ordinating budgeting and fundraising (c. £30,000 from govt trusts and members), and maintaining accounts and membership records. Overseas volunteer experience (or similar) and admin/finance experience in small organisations desirable. Salary £3,300. Job description/appl. form from RVA, 1c Cambridge Terrace, London NW1 4JL (01-935 9447). Closing date 24 February.

BARTON CHILDREN'S HOLIDAYS have vacancies for the following posts for centres in South England and Yorkshire — July-Sept. 1. Senior Staff — to run Centre or assist person in charge — to organise children's programme and staff. 2. Supervisors — to organise children's activities. 3. Drivers — for excursions, travel-escorts. 4. Matrons and assistant matrons. 5. Sports Instructors and English teachers. For details please contact The Staffing Dept, B.C.H., West Woodyates Manor, Nr Salisbury, Wilts. Tel.: 07255 321 — send s.a.e.

SENIOR REPORTER required for Lancashire bi-weekly on edge of industrial belt and bordering the Ribble Valley. Moderate house prices, brief council waiting list for key workers. Apply The Editor, Accrington Observer, Edgar St, Accrington. Tel. 35454.

MEDICAL/SECRETARIES and receptionists urgently required for doctors and hospitals, perm. and temp. M. & S. Agency, 124 Gloucester Road, SW7. 373 7185.

PUBLISHING SECRETARIES (Permanent or Temporary)—it's always the widest choice at Covent Garden Bureau, 53 Fleet Street, EC4. 353 7696.

Appt Wanted

CAMBRIDGE Social Science graduate reqs work as research assistant. Box 327.

Publications

BOOKWORMS. Our next special Books Number of 24 February will contain a special 'Bookworm' column. Any books or publications wanted can be advertised for just 50p a line. (Average 6 words a line, min. 2 lines. Box Numbers 50p extra). Please enclose remittance with order and send now to: 'Bookworm', New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1 or Tel: Robin Cooper 01-242 5486.

OUTPOSTS. Poems invited for future issues. S.a.e. to Howard Sergeant, 72 Burwood Rd, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 4AL.

SAPPHO. Lesbian/Feminist magazine 50p inc. post. Basement, 20 Dorset Square, London NW1 6QB.

FANTASY/SCIENCE FICTION general board war-games and role-playing games. The UKs most comprehensive catalogue from the mail-order specialists. Send s.a.e. to Steel (E7), 2 Morley Rd, Farnham, Surrey.

COMING SOON! CATALOGUE 348. General, secondhand and antiquarian books. James Thin, 53-59 South Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1YS.

WORLD HISTORY. Books bought & Catalogues issued on most areas. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

SELLING 1000'S ORIGINAL newspapers, magazines (1680's — 1940's). Yesterday's News (NS1), 43 Dundonald Road, Colwyn Bay, Clwyd.

YOUR NEW STATESMAN SUBSCRIPTION will cost you £5 less with your National Student Discount Card. You'll also get 15,000 guaranteed discounts on petrol, food, magazines, clothing and lots more. Send £2.50 to NSDS, Department NS, PO Box 190, London WC1E 7HR.

REVIEW BOOKS and others in fine condition bought. D. Levin, Bookseller, 13 Grape Street, London WC2. 01-240 2376.

SECONDHAND Fiction and Biography, also new books at reduced prices, all at World of Books, 30 Sackville Street, London W1.

LIBRARIES BOUGHT. Hammersmith Books, Barnes High St. London SW13. 01-876 7254

Financial

LOANS FROM £30. Salaried Persons Postal Loans Ltd, 175 Regent St, W1. 734 3519.

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES
£50 to £25,000 unsecured
REGIONAL TRUST LTD
8 Clifford St, New Bond St, LONDON W1
01-734 5983 or 2914

Secretarial

BOOK MSS efficiently typed. Low rates. Cox, 30 Tennyson Rd, Romford, Essex.

GROUP of postgraduates will arrange to have your editing, proof-reading, indexing, typing etc. done expertly. Phone 727 5289.

QUALITY typing, English, German, French. Moderate charges. Anne Shotts, 452 6617.

IBM TYPEWRITING, DUPLICATING and Xeroxing, also transcribing from Grundig tapes and Philips 86 cassettes. Scotts, 80 Queensway, London W2. 01-727 5828.

School

THE NEW SCHOOL, King's Langley, based on the educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. This method of education aims at unfolding individual faculties and the development of truly social impulses. Co-educational Boarding and Day School, 5-18 years. GCE at 'O' and 'A' levels. Prospectus on application. King's Langley 62505.

Removals

TAXIMOVES FOR 1 & 2 TON VANS, all with helpful working drivers. 722 7661.

GENTLE GHOST
REMOVALS COOPERATIVE
Fast, cheap & reliable
All sizes
603 2865/602 3719
33 Norland Rd, London W11.

Holidays/ Travel

EASTER WEEK'S SWAP? Academic family's Victorian detached house in Norwich (medieval city near Broads and coast) for family house in central London. Phone Norwich 21990.

1978 FARM HOLIDAY GUIDE in three editions, England, Scotland, Wales, describing Britain's best farmhouse accomm. Available from Booksellers & Newsagents.

WINTER BREAKS for £22, two persons for two days. Superior, fully equipped cottages in Cotswold Hills. Colour brochure from Michael Blanchard, Cockbury Court, Winchcombe, Glos. Tel. Bishops Cleeve 4153.

SUMMER JOBS DIRECTORIES: Abroad or Britain, in W. H. Smith, etc. £1.95 each or from VacWork, 9 Park End St, Oxford.

ATHENS £18. Geneva, Italy, Yugo, Istanbul, Israel, Paris. Coach/boat. 01-485 6078.

WORLD WIDE ECONOMY FLIGHTS. Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, Far East, Europe, Tel Aviv & South Africa. Haymarket Travel Ltd, 31 Haymarket, SW1. 839 6958.

HANG GLIDING HOLIDAYS in the Brecon Beacons. 2, 4 & 6 days beginners courses. Brochure from the Welsh Hang Gliding Centre, Dept NS, Crickhowell, Nr Abergavenny, S. Wales. Tel: (0873) 81009. Only 2½ hrs from London.

ATHENS! ATHENS! ATHENS! From £79 including surcharges. Instant confirmation. Capricorn Travel, 27 Ebury Bridge Rd, London SW1. Tel. 01-730 6152.

WHY NOT LET YOUR HOME, in holidays, to a foreign teaching family (or rent his home). Internat. circle of teachers, officials etc., N. Hinloopen, English master, 35 Stetweg, Castricum, Holland.

SELF-CATERING Holidays at the Hatfield Polytechnic. July-September, rates from £15.00. Anna Brown, The Hatfield Polytechnic, P.O. Box 109, Hatfield AL10 9AB.

BARGING HOLIDAYS on the French waterways. Details from: West Lodge, Umberslade, Hockley Heath, Warks. 056-442431.

ACTIVITY HOLIDAYS. Adults, families, children, schools and clubs. Sailing, canoeing, water ski-ing, sub aqua, pony trekking, orienteering and ancillary sports. Dept NS, Courtlands Centre, Kingsbridge, S. Devon. Loddiswell 227.

MAGIC BUS. Amsterdam £10, Paris £10.50, Athens £26, Barcelona £27, Copenhagen £28, Lisbon £35.50, Morocco £47. 74 Shaftesbury Ave, W1. 439 0729, 439 0557.

EXPRESS TRAVEL. Greece, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Spain. 01-734 6661/2.

NEAR ENGLISH LAKES, flat in old-world house, sleeps 4, £35-£60 per week. Tel. Ulverston 52460.

WELSH HILLS. Superb sit., all comforts. D. b.&b. £35 each p.w. Bonner, Bron Fadog, Trefriw LL27 0QA. Llanrwst 640566.

USA SUMMER JOBS, ranches, resorts, etc. Up to £100 p.w. Send £4.30 for Directory listing 90,000 jobs to Vac-Work, 9 Park End Street, Oxford.

BEST VALUE FARES, regular, reliable departures, world-wide & European destinations. MAS, Empire House, 119 Regent St, London W1. 439 8511 (answerphone) 2/3.

SCHEDULED ECONOMY FLIGHTS to Australia, New Zealand, Far East, India, Africa, Tel-Aviv, Tokyo, America, and Europe. Contact WTS, 3 Winnett Street, London W1.

Avoid the Crowds

Lovely old Cornish houses on peaceful, private estate, with boating lake and trout fishing. Available for April, May, June, August and Sept. Write to: Estate Manager, Glynn Estate, Bodmin, Cornwall.

HOLIDAYS FOR THINKING PEOPLE
ALBANIA, CHINA, COLUMBIA, CUBA, ICELAND, VIETNAM
Regent Holidays,
13 SMALL STREET, BRISTOL BS1 1DE.
TEL: 0272 211711
ATOL 556B

WINTER BREAK
The heart of ancient Wessex.
Fine old coaching inn taking pride in its cuisine and extensive wine list.
2-day stay from £8 per person, per day, fully inclusive, dinner, B. & B., VAT and service. Children under 3 free. Over 3 and under 14, £3 per night.
Old Ship Hotel, Mere (Wiltshire) 258

SPECIAL FARE '77/78

BANGKOK	TOKYO
SINGAPORE	DJAKARTA
KUALA LUMPUR	DELHI
HONG KONG	AUSTRALIA
MANILA	NEW ZEALAND

and all destinations in Europe, Middle and Far East.
Try us first.
The Travel News (UK) Ltd, Radnor House, 93/97 Regent St, London W1. Tel: 01-439 4578/9

GREECE
GREEK ISLANDS
SPAIN
LUXURY CAMPING HOLIDAYS, HOTELS, VILLAS, TAVERNAS FLIGHTS TO ATHENS, CORFU & CRETE
from £47 (including basic accommodation). Athens by coach from £24. Phone, write or call for colour brochure:
VENTURA HOLIDAYS
Dept. N. 279 South Road, Sheffield S6 3TA. Phone Sheffield (0742) 333392/342391.

MAY DAY TRAVEL BARGAINS

PARIS £27.50p, BERLIN (GDR) £36, both: April 30th - May 2nd.

MADRID (& Barcelona) £75, LENINGRAD £120, both: April 25th-May 6th.

SPRING-TIME TRAVEL BARGAINS

ALGERIA £100. April 8th-21st. A country of Mosques, Palaces, Oases, Arab Markets and sunny beaches, that has taken the Socialist Road.

VENICE, VERONA, BOLOGNA £70. May 27th-June 4th. Staying by superb Lake Garda, with full sight-seeing programme included.

YORKSHIRE TOURS,
49 Thornton Lodge Road, Huddersfield HD1 3JQ.
Phone 0484 24269

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOR ADDICTS
500 PIECES
500 CLUES
DOUBLE SIDED

A Must for Masochists ONLY £1.99 + 36p p. & p. from:

Pride of Place Ltd, The Mill, Blackwood, Gwent.

Courses

cont. from p. 168

DEGREE, GCE and professional courses by post with qualified tutors and personal timetable from Wolsey Hall, the Oxford Correspondence College. Accredited CACC. Member ABCC. Free prospectus from W. Milligan MA, Dept BG2, Wolsey Hall, Oxford OX2 6PR or tel. 0865-54231 (24 hrs.).

FRENCH, SPANISH, GERMAN, ITALIAN, Russian. Full-time day courses. Evening courses. Conversation (all grades), courses for GCE 'O' & 'A' levels & Institute of Linguists. Correspondence courses. Mentor for Languages 115N Shaftesbury Ave, London WC2 (Cambridge Circus). Tel. 836 3753

GERMAN TUITION, all grades, by British subject academically trained in Germany. 435 8523. NW London.

Centre For Analytical Psychotherapy
Upper Harley Street, London NW1

TRAINING COURSE 1978-79

This three-year programme in psychotherapy consists of weekly seminars and groups in the evening. Introduction to family and group therapy provided, also supervision for first patients.

Applicants should have a University Degree, or relevant professional experience in working with people.

Fees : £85 per term.

All participants are required to have personal twice-weekly psychotherapy throughout their training.

For details, please telephone: 01-935 3070.

Closing date : 30 June 1978

SMOKERS !

We can help you stop with Europe's only guaranteed stop smoking programme.

Call 01-493 5995 or 01-903 6455 (24 hrs)

Mayfair Smokers Clinic
26a Davies St, W1.

Accom. Vacant

QUIET ROOM in attractive riverside house, Kew Gardens. Avail. for 5 months from 18 Feb. Tidy responsible person req. £18 p.w. 01-222 0701 (day), 01-940 2788 (eves).

TWO BEDROOM MAISONETTE S London offered in exchange 24 hours gardening weekly with emphasis on vegetables. Box 268.

Accom. Wanted

DESPERATE! By 13 Feb. young couple (publishing, teaching) must find 2-room flat. 691 0549 or (office) 890 1480 ext. 277.

PROF. COUPLE visiting London seeks flat for July. Own flat in Dusseldorf/Germany or money in exchange. I. Dau, Grupelliostr. 13, D 4000 Dusseldorf.

AMERICAN LAW PROFESSOR (married, infant daughter) on one-year sabbatical at LSE, seeks home N. London starting August/September. Box 308.

RESPONSIBLE WOMAN seeks bed-sit./small flat in/nr Oxford. Possibly short-term. 01-205 4946.

SEMI-RETIRED ARCHITECT & graduate wife seek quiet, congenial flat in London, reas. rent. Civilised ambiance more important than mod. cons. Occas use tel. helpful. Could give architectural services & provide babysitting &/or tuition. Box 325.

RESPONSIBLE STUDENTS seek accom. especially single rooms/flats/houses. Ring London University 405 7686 ext. 468.

VISITING ACADEMICS. Landlords: we urgently require flats & houses within easy reach of the British Museum & the University. Helen Watson & Co. 637 4863.

AMERICAN COUPLE (writer and bookseller), very careful tenants, moving to London, need two bedroom flat from April for long let. Furnished or unfurnished. £135 p.c.m. Ward, Cortnaglough, Ballinhassig, Cork, Ireland.

Personal

TED WILLIS, John Hawkesworth, Richard Imison, Jane Reed, Fay Weldon, will be at the Bognor Writers' Weekend, 15-17 September. Send s.a.e. for details now. M. Hulke (NS), 45 Parliament Hill, London NW3 2TA (01-435 9941).

PRINTING. Economy printing service for books and booklets. Write or phone for price list, specifications guide to preparing text, etc. Foto-Direct Printers Ltd. Ref. A, 32-34 Preston Rd, Brighton BN1 4QF. Tel. Brighton 66418.

THE COMMITTEE AGAINST BLASPHEMY Law. Details of aims, associate membership and affiliation, from the Hon. Secretary, 32 Over Street, Brighton, Sussex.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS JOIN CSM. Details from 59 Dukes Ave, London N10.

SPECIAL OFFER TO NEW STATESMAN Readers. 5 extended play records, plus handbook, making up a rapid home-learning language phrase course. Choose from Spanish, Greek, Dutch, Portuguese, German, Danish, or Norwegian. Now only £2.50 each, three for £6.50, or seven for £11.00. Postage included. Crestacraft (NS2), 5, Clos Cromwell, Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

'SELF IMPROVEMENT through Remedial Handwriting'. Write: 21 Wellington Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs OL6 6DP.

WRITERS WRITING WEEKEND (& beginners). Berks. 11-12 Feb. Sympathetic sm. group. Party. Make friends. J. Wesolowski, 30A, Arundel Sq. N7 (607 4172).

WRITE WITH CONFIDENCE. Short story, TV and Radio, Novels, Poetry, Articles. Lessons by top writers, producers ,editors, BBC, ITV, Fleet Street, Hollywood. Learn how to write and sell. Writing Bureau International, Thirsal House, Earby, Colne, Lancs BB8 6NE.

SALARIED WOMEN'S POSTAL LOANS Ltd. Loans from £30. 175 Regent St. W1. 01-734 1974.

HONEY DIRECT FROM PRODUCER in Wiltshire. Organic beekeeping, 3 lbs £2.35 + 75p p. & p. Excellent flavoured set honey. Malmesbury Vale Honey Co., Bristol Rd, Malmesbury, Wilts.

PHILIP HUMPHREYS. PSYCHOLOGIST. Formerly of Princes Gate. Now at Richmond. Phone 940 4416.

LOW-COST PSYCHOTHERAPY with Arbours Association trainees. Please phone 267 0304 for further information, or write to Arbours Association, 55 Dartmouth Park Road, NW5.

WHAT IS PRIMAL BLISS? Bodymind Methods, Primal, Bioenergetic, Gestalt, Meditation. Reciport (reciprocal non-professional support) can be integrated. Reciport, 10 Steeles Mews South, NW3. Tel. 01-586 4109 (8-9.30 a.m., 6.30-7 p.m. & weekends).

PSYCHOLOGIST/Hypnotherapist P. J. Milllin of Harley Street. Develop confidence/overcome tension; etc. Appts. Tel. 01-800 4045.

ONGOING THERAPY-GROWTH GROUP, Tuesday eves, NW6. 607 4172/794 6062.

NATIONWIDE AND WORLDWIDE contacts in occult, witchcraft, secret temples, etc. S.a.e. — 'Eterna', The Golden Wheel, Birkenhead L43 7RL.

IDENTIFY YOURSELF as what you are — a citizen of the world — WSA can supply: World Passport, World Citizen Identification World Citizen News. Contact: BCM — Passport, London WC1V 6XX.

BOYS & GIRLS come out to play — join Metamorphosis on its lively way. A London social group for lovers of life, 25-45. S.a.e. Box 317.

SUMMER IS A COMING, Prof. mother of 3 (10-16), large car, seeks sim. male co-driver initially for holiday abroad, sun, water, food. Humour, curiosity, energy & reliability needed. SW London to Sussex. If you also happen to play tennis or ski . . . Box 326.

RESEARCH WORKER (f.); fifties; work published; likes music, theatre, poetry; would cherish male (compatible) companion. All letters answered by Frances. Box 328.

UNATTACHED, intelligent male, 26, many interests, seeks warm female for friendship/romance. Box 270.

ESTAB. PROF. WOMAN, 54 sks to extend soc. contacts Berkshire area. Box 274.

CARIBBEAN GRADUATE sks compromising & politically orientated female. Box 335.

FUN-LOVING YET SINCERE 38-year-old professional male seeks attractive younger girl to form caring, sharing relationship; who enjoys music, riding, walking, sailing, home-making, but above all, someone who is capable of forming a meaningful and perhaps lasting relationship. Your location not important, mine is London and Hampshire/Surrey border. Box 273.

ARTS LECTURER, 46, Manchester, seeks congenial female company. Box 258.

N.W. LONDON READERS

ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH YOUR T.V. RENTAL SERVICE?

DRAZIN LTD offer a high standard of service with a wide choice of models.

We have been established in Hampstead since 1927. Telephone 435 7441 or call **at our showrooms at**

59 HEATH ST, NW3

(opposite Hampstead Tube Station)

N.W. London readers only, please

BIOFEEDBACK! REDUCE STRESS!

relax and enjoy life with GSR Electronic Monitor. No wires/attachments, simply placing two fingers on Sensor plates activates Monitor. Battery op. £32.83. 'It works. It does encourage you to learn how to relax and it does, in fact, do everything it claims in such respects', Sheila Black, The Times, 8/77. Now available: An *Electronic Blood Pressure Monitor.* No stethoscope required. £49.68. For those in the London area from John Bell & Croyden, Wigmore St, W1, or direct. Brochures from: Andrew Stephens (1947) Co., Medical Electronics, 41/NS. Dickson Road, Blackpool. Tel: 0253 23755.

ARE YOU A TALL PROF. MAN? Attractive, alive & adventurous? Gregarious, good-humoured & generous? Fit, fun & fortyish/fiftyish? Appreciative of sincere, sensitive & stimulating, feminine company? Possibility of sharing luxury flat NW London. Box 207.

LADY, single, 31, considered attractive, would like to meet gentleman, 35-45, unattached, fairly well established, fond of classical music, interested in forming lasting relationship SE England. No affairs. Box 330.

MARRIED HERMIT, tall, slim, presentable, easy going, hopes for occasional meetings with female who needs & enjoys loving male company & responds warmly to gentleness & affection, age secondary. Box 251.

ECLECTIC, chic, leftish (?) f. London, invites caring m. 50 +. s.v.p. reply: Box 284.

SOLO CONCERT. OPERA, theatre-goer, (f., 52) seeks ditto NS reader (m.), share pleasure, London. Box 283.

MAN 52, tall, separated, Jewish, not religious, wishes to meet woman, not over 48, London area. Box 285.

FEMALE LAWYER, 40s, young appearance, marriage failed, wishes to meet tall, cultured, personable, professional man or graduate, late 40s or early 50s, with eventual marriage in mind. Interests: home, travel, theatre, music, simple fun, progressive views. Box 289.

MERSEYSIDE. Teacher (f. 36), new to area, seeks male companion. Interests: walking, music, theatre. Box 288.

HOMOSEXUAL? LESBIAN? PROBLEMS? Ring the women and men at 'Friend' any evening on 01-359 7371.

PRESTIGE PARTNERS

NS 34, Baker Street, London W.1.

Friendship Marriage Bureau for Professionals & Academics. Represented throughout U.K.

Write for free details or phone

01-487 5797

WHAT WOULD YOU DO

If you were a reasonably competent marketing executive who was heralded as the *expert in aristocratic* matchmaking by newspapers as diverse as the 'Sunday Times' and 'Tit-Bits'? (Suggestions on how to translate this prestige into profit welcome).

You would have a problem for sure — how to promote a host of exceptionally saleable ladies who were not averse to meeting 'Lord Right' but equally happy to meet any reasonable looking, educated, solvent, unattached, heterosexual male. So please do us a favour, post this advertisement to anyone who fits the bill. Please, no alcoholics, illiterates, manic-depressives, the unwashed or the *obviously* unwholesome.

CURRENT MARKETABLE ASSETS INCLUDE:

Single lady, 38, green eyes, auburn hair, academic/aristocratic origins. Professionally qualified. Translator of educational and literary works. Fond of all music. Keen gardener. Well-built, rugged type preferred. Ref. 108

Tall, slim divorcée, 48, charming manner, lively personality, extremely cultured (travelled 4 continents), active tennis, badminton and golf player, tries cabin cruising for relaxation but always ends up overboard. Ref. 111

Humorous lady, NW London, enjoying life as she passes the half century. A most feminine, gentle person with great depth, compassion and sensitivity. Besides this she's well read and well informed. Ref. 114

Address all letters to appropriate Ref. No or inquire for details of our service.

Joan Remick Marriage Bureau, 155 Knightsbridge, London SW1. 01-584 5151 or 01-589 7567

ONE FRIENDSHIP AGENCY stands out from the rest. Find out more by joining Sue Carr, Somerset Villa, Harrogate. Free brochure. Tel. 0423 63525 anytime.

LOVE & MARRIAGE is a Bureau for single parents and people who enjoy family life. S.a.e. 400 Harrow Road, London W9.

K. & S. (PENPAL CLUB). Have penfriends all over the world. Write to: 32 Rectory Lane, Bury, Lancashire.

UNUSUAL PEN FRIENDS excitingly different, highly personal dept. & married couples dept. Monthly journal. Free brochure. S.a.e. (SNX) *Bureau des Amies, PO Box 54,* Rugby, Warks.

WHY READ THE 'SMALLS' in this column? Join Nexus! You can get in touch with *hundreds of unattached people* by simply lifting the 'phone — to help you start communicating you will know a lot more than they can put in an ad — and socially there is everything you could want! Nexus is not an introduction agency or a 'lonely hearts' club. Phone Barbara or Peter 01-359 7656 or 01-359 6703 (incl. Sats).

A FLASK OF WINE, A BOOK OF VERSE, and no-one to share 'em? Well, don't just sit there! Contact 'Status', the premier and reputable intro service for unattached professional people. 'Status', 88 Marylebone High Street, W1. 286 2128 (24 hrs.).

FEES ARE SLASHED for gentlemen aged over 54. Send details with s.a.e. and meet attractive, successful life partners for *marriage-friendship.* Hed! *Fisher Consultancy,* 14 Beauchamp Place, SW3.

RAPPORT — the thinking person's introduction service. Write today to Rapport, 7 South Parade, Oxford.

FIND FRIENDSHIP, LOVE or marriage. All ages, areas — free details from: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept NT, 23 Abingdon Road, London W8. Tel. 01-937 6503.

Personal Services

FAMILY PLANNING: Choose from our FPA-approved range. Introductory prices: 13-sheath sampler 70p; 48 Gossamer £2.70; 48 Fiesta £3.80; 40 Forget Me Not £2.00 plus free 'expert's guide to the sheath' with your first order. Dept N5N18, F P Sales Ltd, 28 Kelburne Road, Oxford.

DUREX by POST

48 Gossamer/New Eros	£3.20
24 Nuform/Fetherlite	£2.20
24 Unison/Blk. Shadow	£2.50
24 Stimula/Conture	£2.85
6 French Ticklers	£2.40
23 International Asstd.	£2.40
Marital Aids Colour Cat.	30p

Request £1 Super Samples with all orders £3 min.

SUMMIT DISTRIBUTIONS LTD. Tamworth (N12), Staffs. B79 7SP

SEX SUPERMARKET
THE ADULT CENTRE
(established over 10 years)
for Sex Aids and Appliances, Vibrators, French Ticklers, Exotic Undies etc.
Catalogues 10p + postage, on request.
519 Sheffield Rd, Whittington Moor, Chesterfield. Tel. 451118
International sheath leaflet inc. DUREX brands s.a.e.

CELEBRATE YOUR SEXUALITY

Our capacity to respond sexually is restricted by early negative conditioning. With information, exploration and discussion we can learn to expand our sexual awareness. Women's groups, men's groups, mixed groups.

Phone 01-452 9261.

LOSING YOUR HAIR?

Hair Problems without the aid of Hair Transplants, Wigs, or Hair Pieces. If you're in need of help or my assistance with hair problems.

Write:

'SUMMIT'
162 SEFTON STREET, SOUTHPORT, MERSEYSIDE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 95 No. 2446

Contents

138 **James Fenton:** The Fencourt File

139 **Anthony Howard:** She Stoops to Conquer

140 **Boris Kidel:** The Giscard-Marchais Axis

141 **Mary Holland:** Enoch's Home Base

142 **Hilary Land:** A Better Deal for Women?

144 **Patrick Wintour:** Casualties on the Home Front

146 **Profile of David Owen**

148 **Gerda Cohen:** The Joshua Generation

149 **A. J. P. Taylor:** London Diary

150 **Craig Brown:** My Generation

151 **Arthur Marshall:** Name This Child

151 **Roger Woddis:** What Goes Up

152 **Letters to the Editor**

Books & Arts

154 **Clive James:** Brezhnev

156 **Peter Conrad:** Marie Corelli

Other reviews by Julian Barnes, Stephen Koss, Jonathan Keates, John Sturrock, Michael Mason, Derek Mahon

160 **John Spurling:** Art

160 **Benedict Nightingale:** Theatre

161 **John Coleman:** Films

162 **Russell Davies:** Television

163 **Weekend Competition and Chess**

164 **Crossword**

Theatres

ALDWYCH (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Recorded booking info. 836 5332. Congreve's 'The Way of The World', Jonson's 'The Alchemist', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse at Donmar Theatre in Charles Wood's 'Dingo', Bond's 'The Bundle', 'Macbeth' (sold out). Also at Piccadilly Theatre in Peter Nichol's 'Privates on Parade' and at Savoy Theatre in 'Man and Superman'.

ALMOST FREE THEATRE. 485 6224. 'The Irish Hebrew Lesson' by Wolf Mankowitz. Sundays 2.30 & 4.0. Mon-Thurs. 1.15. Until 16 Feb.

BROADWAY THEATRE. 248 3836. 'Funny Relations' "did you hear the one about the Cockney, the IRA man and the National Front enthusiast . . . ?" New musical. Opens 7 Feb. 8 p.m. nightly.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. To Sat. 'Penny Whistle'. From Thurs. 9 Feb. Prevs 'Bodies', a play by James Saunders with David Burke, Dinsdale Landen, Anne Stallybrass & Gwen Watford.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'The Cherry Orchard', 'The Plough & The Stars', 'The Guardsman', 'The Lady from Maxim's', 'Bedroom Farce', 'Sir Gawain & The Green Knight', 'Half Life'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

THEATRE AT NEW END (Hampstead tube) 794 0238. 'Exploration' from the writings of Wallace Stevens. 6-18 Feb. 10.30 p.m.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334

Worth queuing for from breakfast time Financial Times.

TOM STOPPARD'S DIRTY LINEN

Mon. - Thurs. at 8.30. Fri. & Sat. 7.00. & 9.15.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

75p per line (average 6 words; minimum 2 lines) Box No 50p

Trade in Personal £1.00 Display, centimetre £4.25

Send copy to arrive Monday a.m. or telephone 01-405 8471

NEW STATESMAN, GREAT TURNSTILE, LONDON WC1V 7HJ

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. 'Laughter' by Peter Barnes. Mon.-Fri. 8 p.m. Sats 5 & 8.30 p.m.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. From 7-25 Feb. 'Sleuth' by Anthony Shaffer with Patrick Cargill.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL. 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube). Visconti's 'The Innocent' (X). Progs at 2.05, 4.25, 6.45, 9.05.

Exhibitions

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt. Turnstile, WC1 405 9836. 18 & 19C prints by Gericault, Buhot, Helleu. List on request and lithographs by Moore, Whiteley, Lowry.

A Rare Opportunity
to see
ART BOOKS FROM THE SOVIET UNION
2 - 24 February,
Mon.-Fri. 10-6, Sats. 10-1.
Admission FREE.
Facilities for ordering books.
National Book League,
7 Albemarle Street, W1.
(off Piccadilly) 01-493 9001

Meetings

'CORPORAL PUNISHMENT', discussion meeting, London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W8. Sun. 5 Feb. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

BUT IS IT REALLY MUSIC?

A country weekend, not too far from London, for all who like the music they know and wish they knew about progressive styles in other forms (classical, jazz, pop) to enjoy them just as much. 10-12 Feb: **Graham Collier** (well-known composer, educator & band leader) & **Roger Dean** (critic, journalist & symphony orchestra player) lead the proceedings by talking & playing. Full board, tuition & concert £16.50 (£30 double). Details & enrolment forms for this & weekends of **Choral singing** (Schubert mass with **Jacques Orchestra**), **Keyboard Master Classes** (**Kendall Taylor** on Beethoven), **Recorder Ensembles** (**Carl Dolmetsch**) from **Ted Smith, Director of Arts, Saffron Walden International College, Saffron Walden, Essex. Tel. 0799 22918.**

THAMES FILM FESTIVAL 10-24 February

Robert Aldrich tribute
Celluloid Rock
Documentary
Experimental film-maker George Kuchar in person
Bernard Hermann tribute
Jazz and Blues at Covent Garden Cinema
U.S. independent film-makers attending
Wim Wenders
Womenscene, with film-makers attending
Details: 01-855 0618, or Thames Polytechnic, Thomas St., London SE18 6HU

Thames Film Festival

"Many, Merry, Refrains" — EVENING NEWS

"Bouncing Vigour" — EVENING STANDARD

Come sailing round the world with PAUL JONES in Drake's Dream

ENGLAND'S GREATEST MUSICAL ADVENTURE

PRESENTED BY SUE AND MARTIN GATES

"Exciting" FIN. TIMES

Admission Prices £1.50 to £4.00
Seats Bookable in Advance

Performances
Monday to Friday 8.00 pm
Matinee Thursday 3.00 pm
Saturday 5.00 and 8.00 pm

WESTMINSTER THEATRE
Palace Street, SW1. – 01-8340283

UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
Peace in Our Time
The European Balance
A conference to be held at the University of Kent on 30 March-2 April 1978. Further details from the School of Continuing Education, The University, Canterbury. Tel: (0227) 66822 ext. 380.

THE CITY UNIVERSITY
St John Street, EC1.

GRESHAM LECTURES IN DIVINITY
'ASPECTS OF ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION'

Three one-hour public lectures by Viscount Combermere BD MTH on Fridays, 10, 17 and 24 February at 1 p.m.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Ben Stoneham, the Treasurer, on 'The Campaign for a Labour Victory'. 8 Feb. 7.30. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1 (nr Russell Sq. Tube). All welcome. Collection.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. Admission free. 7 Feb. 'University College and the re-birth of British Physiology' by Professor Sir Andrew Huxley; 9 Feb. 'True Story of the Civil War' (original photos).

GEORGE STEINER, Professor at Geneva University and Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, will give a lecture, 'Dans la maison du langage' on Friday 10 February at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, SW7. Tel: 01-589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'Problems of a Child Psychiatrist', K. A. Graf MD, DPM, MRCPsych. Tuesday 7 February 7.30 p.m. Mary Sumner Hall, 24 Tufton St, SW1. Visitors welcome 50p. (Students 25p).

'RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES and their importance to the Third World'. Speaker: Dr J. C. McVeigh, Brighton Polytechnic. A joint meeting with the London Branch of the Institute of Petroleum. 6.15 p.m. Thursday 9 Feb. Adm. 25p for non-members of the RCS. Focus Group, Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, WC2. 930 6733.

YOUNG MAPAM presents 'Antonio Das Mortes' (Rocha 1968, Brazil) film and discussion at 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6, on Sunday 5 February at 8 p.m. Adm. 60p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Sq., London SW1. Sat. 4 Feb. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 7 Feb. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 8 Feb. 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture 'Kamakura Koans' – Trevor Leggett. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full prog.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers: Sun. 5 Feb. 8 p.m. 'Mind Control & Meditation'. S.a.e. free pamphlet, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

Courses

FRENCH INSTITUTE — Evening Classes in French Language, Civilisation and Translation. Registration from 25 January to 8 February. Courses commence 20 February. Details from 14 Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JR (S.a.e.) Tel. 589 6211 (Ext. 45).

THE LIU ACADEMY SCHOOL OF I CHING Studies, part-time Diploma Course on the I Ching (Book of Changes) up to consultant level. Apply The Liu Clinic, 13 Gunnersbury Avenue, London W5. Tel: 01-993 2549 anytime.

REPORTING THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

A 2-week course on covering the Community, devised by journalists for journalists, including direct elections, the CAP and regional news. Speakers include Gerald Long, David Wood and Keith Kyle.

Sunday 2 April to Friday 14 April at The City University, London.

Course fee: £90.

Student accommodation: £45.00 (10 nights).

Details from: **Mary Harris, Centre for Arts & Related Studies, The City University, St John Street, London EC1V 4PB.**
Telephone: 01-253 4399 ext 371

COURSES Cont. on p. 167

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Printed in England by Eden Fisher (Southend) Ltd. *Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd., at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ.* Second class postage paid at New York NY.

LICENSED TO GALE.COM
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED